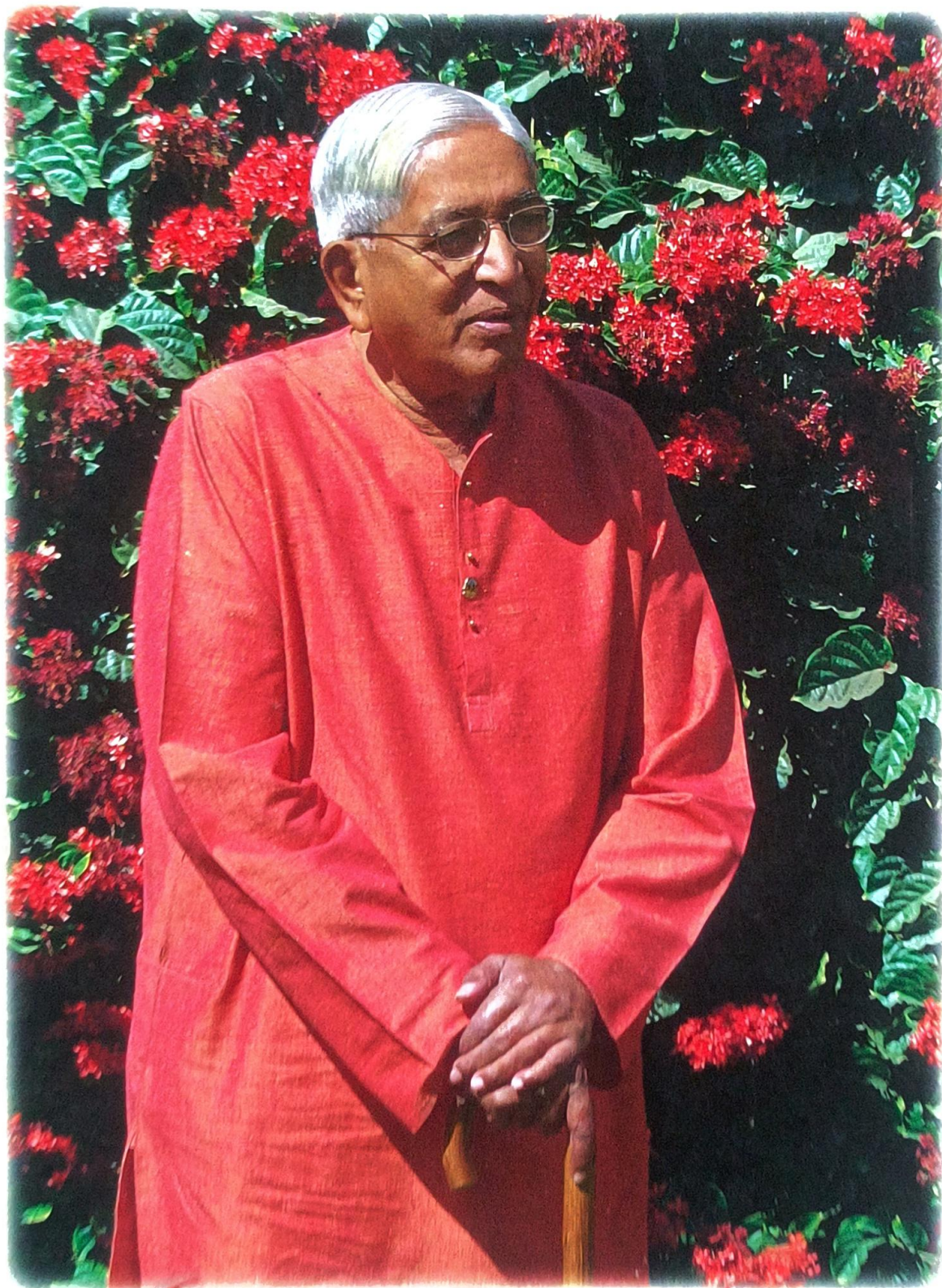




HeartSpeak *2003*

Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

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Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION
Manapakkam, Chennai – 600 116, India

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Published under license by
Spiritual Hierarchy Publication Trust
“Divine Bliss”
North Block, 2/3, Judges Court Road,
Kolkata - 700 027

First Edition 2009 10,000 Copies

ISBN 978-93-80335-08-7

Printer:
Universal Print Systems Ltd.
Chennai, India.

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Publisher's Note

We are pleased to present *HeartSpeak 2003*, part of the HeartSpeak series of collected talks and lectures delivered in India and abroad by our beloved Master Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (Chariji). This series features many inspiring and uplifting talks given by Chariji while on tour in India, Australia, USA and Europe in the year 2003. Some of these talks have been previously available on the SRCM website; however the majority are available to aspirants in print for the first time.

In this book Chariji talks of the importance of complete dedication and commitment to all aspects of our sadhana. Through love for the Master and persistence in our daily abhyas we develop the inner strength required to follow the Sahaj Marg path. As we progress we begin to transcend our attachment to the physical form of the Master so that slowly, steadily, sincerely we start to internalize Him in the heart.

Ultimately we must become such that morally we emulate the Master and spiritually we become like the Master – He who eternally loves.

“So you see, we progress from a partial approach to spirituality, starting with the four angas of Sahaj Marg – meditation, cleaning, prayer-meditation, and constant remembrance – to a totality of emulation of the spiritual life of the great Master who has inducted us into this path.”

1

Live in the Present

I don't have much to say. Brother Prakash has just reminded me that today is my seventy-sixth New Year. If a man's achievement was to be measured in terms of the number of years he has lived, then of course it's a different story altogether. But, you know, when we are young, we have this enthusiasm of youth. Not only health and vitality, but the enthusiasm. When you are young, there is a future to look forward to, whatever may be that future. It may be an education, it may be just sports, it may be career, it may be marriage. But as we grow out of it, say twelve years, thirteen years, fourteen years, life tends to become progressively more and more of a burden. I see it all around us. I see it in the big burdens that children have to bear. I remember a time, in my grandfather's days – my maternal grandfather – when children ran around free. They didn't have much to bother about, much to bother about education, or anything for that matter. It was a life of freedom, not in some transcendental sense, but freedom from worry, from fear, and essentially, freedom from the fear of

New Year's Day, 1st January 2003, Babuji Memorial Ashram, Manapakkam, India

the future. Children never thought of the future. They were in the present, playing in the present, happy in the present.

Today we are only talking of the future. It's a very unfortunate change that seems to have occurred, that today we are doing nothing but talking of the future, saving money for the future, postponing our enjoyment to the future, buying books to read the day after tomorrow or next year, nothing to be done in the present. Then what are we doing in the present? It's all right to talk of meditating from 2002 into 2003, but what does it mean? This is all just words, you know.

I was just thinking of seventy-sixth New Year and, just after meditation, I was just trying to compute how many real hours of meditation I would have done. You know, like pilots when they fly a plane, they have a logbook that they have flown ten thousand hours, eleven thousand hours, twelve thousand hours, over a span of even, say, fifteen years. How many hours of meditation have we really done? We have kept our eyes closed [chuckles], but have we been meditating? In my own case, I would not hazard even a guess that I have meditated perhaps five thousand hours in my whole life. And that is a drop in the ocean. And with this meagre record of meditation, of *dhyana*, we expect to go into something we call the brighter world. We don't know where it is. We don't know what is meant by brighter world. All that we can think of is a world of darkness in which we are living, and imagine that it is illuminated so that it is very bright. Even the literature of the Hindus speaks only of such a world, you know, illuminated by a thousand suns or one crore suns, *kotisurya samaprabha*. Our imagination is not able to go beyond, and rightly,

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because you cannot imagine something which is transcendental.

Even if you read fantasy, we can only extrapolate from what we are, to something imagined that can be possible – science fiction, space travel, time travel. I used to be fascinated by time travel, I don't know why. You just push a lever, wheeee it goes and from 2003, suddenly you are in 21764 AD. I don't know what I would do there. Again, in another world in which you are unfamiliar, you don't know the language, you don't know the people, but you are still where you were, because in time travel there is no space travel, only time travel. Today we are doing a lot of space travel and we have no time for anything else. Whizzing around in aeroplanes, faster and faster. The same grind, you know, round and round, monotonous, soul-killing.

So what is this future that we are thinking of, when we don't even have the present in our grip? If I'm not alive in my present, what am I going to do in the future? I'm dead. Our children have no time to live in the present. They have no time to play football, no time for table tennis. They have to prepare for a future!

You know, I've been reading a lot of this...I won't say rubbish [chuckles] because it is a good subject, about, for instance, Babuji's favourite Nasadiya Sukta, there where neither the sun shines nor the moon shines nor the wind blows, where it is neither dark nor light. Now where can it really be? We are always thinking of something, you know, in heaven, wherever it may be, we don't know where it is, but we are always thinking of There, or There, or There. But what about *here*? [Points to the heart] Because this is really where the wind does not blow, the sun does not shine, the moon

does not shine, there is no time, and that is where the divine says He exists. Even religion does not point in the right direction. At least, we imagine that it is pointing somewhere far away like the Christian heaven, the nirvana of Buddhists, the heaven of Islam, it is all There. If it is There, what am I doing here? So spirituality seeks to prove to you, by experience, that this wonderful abode of the divine, where neither the sun shines nor the moon nor the wind blows, where there is neither light nor darkness, where there is no day, no night, there He exists, that must only be this place inside me, my heart. But we are meditating and we're meditating and we're meditating, and trying to compute how many hours of meditation we did and we despair, that after seventy-six years I have a meagre, supposed figure of say two thousand hours of meditation. What is it worth?

So you see, all that enthusiasm of youth, that spirit of youth, that freshness of youth, is lost progressively as we become older, because as we grow older and older we find we have done less and less. If unfortunately, I say deliberately unfortunately, you are somebody like my Master, Babuji Maharaj, who has done something with his life, who is in the present, not somewhere in the future...I mean if my Master was in the future I would never have contacted him, never have made friends with him, never have lived with him, never have loved him, never have made any use of him. Can I use somebody who is in the future? It is like a man saying, "My girlfriend is in the future twenty years away." Anything we want, we want here and now. I want air to breathe, it must be here now. I want food, I want it now. I want happiness, I want it now. Spirituality, we want

Live in the Present

it tomorrow, day after tomorrow, next year, when I'm old enough, when I've made enough money, enough mistakes, enough miseries, killed enough wives!

So it is our fault, you see, that what should be in the present we are postponing into the future, and then we are living in a present which is not the present at all because there is nothing in it other than bricks and stone and mortar and gold and silver and unhappiness. Spirituality says, "Dear friend, live in the present. Forget heaven, forget hell, neither exists. If it exists, it is right where you are. You don't have to go to it. It is there in you right now. So what are you looking for, what are you searching for? Realize this, turn inside, see that divine abode of God – again, to repeat: no sun, no moon, no wind, no tides, no light, no darkness, no day, no night. What can it be? Experience it."

So we experience, but we don't see because we are trying to see something with these eyes with which we cannot see.

I have a question. Do we really see darkness or do we experience darkness? Do we ever see light? Emphatically not, because we only see objects illuminated by light. Light we never see. Similarly darkness we never see. God we never see. Then what are we talking about seeing, seeing is believing?

So you see we have to train ourselves and the next generations into believing and accepting and realizing that all they have to live for is now, here, in the present. If it is not here, it is never going to be. I cannot conceive of a moon a hundred years away. "It will come into existence a hundred years later." I can only see the moon that is here today. So this tendency to look out, to read religious literature and say, "It is

there,” “That you are” – *Tat tvam asi* – you know, all this rubbish, has corrupted the most supposedly favourite spiritual land which is India and supposedly the most spiritual people, the wonderful Indians. I sometimes think that the Christian and the Jew and the Muslim have something to hold to, but we have lost that also. They have at least one God and one heaven you see, and we have so many Gods and so many heavens. To my mind the Hindu is the most blighted human being on earth today. They have lost direction; they have lost sense of purpose. They go around like ants scurrying around, you know, picking up pieces of sugar to store in some hole in the ground which they will never enjoy.

We have heard of beggars who are dead and they have thousands of rupees sewn into their clothes. Today's millionaire is nothing more, except that his clothes are not enough to put his wealth in, so they are in bank lockers and elsewhere, you see. So what is the difference between the beggar who is dead, with ten thousand rupees in notes sewn into his dirty clothes, or the multi-millionaire who is dead, and who has a lot of gold and silver and jewels and diamonds in his bank lockers? Nothing. Then what are we doing? Beggar did not enjoy the money that he got from begging, and the rich man has no time to enjoy the money that he has probably stolen, cheated, some of it made by, let us say, honest means, which was the original capital that he had.

And yet we are talking of the future, we are talking of spirituality; we are talking of God's grace, God's immense love, God's mercy. I am sick of hearing this term mercy and compassion. Really sick, you see, because it is a sick person and a sick society which wants

Live in the Present

a merciful God and a compassionate God, because it shows our total impotence, that I cannot come out of the morass of ignorance and criminality and sin into which I have plunged myself. So I need a merciful God to pull me out. I'm not questioning God's mercy or God's compassion. I'm questioning this fact that why should we have to be so dependent on God being merciful and compassionate, had we but, for the lack of a better term, the spunk to get up and walk in the right direction.

The other day I made a suggestion in one of the centres in Andhra Pradesh that a human being, from the moment he or she is born, if they would live without interfering with the operation of their samskaras, without interfering or without allowing desire to interfere and create more samskaras, that one life would be enough. You know, philosophy speaks, religion speaks, that animals, insects, birds, plants, minerals, they all evolve naturally and they pass from level to level. They never get stuck at one level. We are stuck. Why? Because they have no desire.

If you but study the difference in why human beings are stuck... and we have this wonderful story of repeated rebirth. Hinduism talks of seven million births before being born a human being. Imagine, seven million births! And then after being born a human being, how many? Maybe seventy million, because now we are wilful, saturated with desires, obsessed with desires. It doesn't matter whether you desire a woman or gold or anything like that. It is desire. What does it matter which desire kills you? I don't see any difference. I cannot imagine a society, where to love a woman is more sinful than to love gold, or to love silver, or to

love something else, or to love a cow or love a dog. I cannot imagine, what is the difference. So you see we have corrupted our souls, now we are begging on our knees, "Have compassion on me, O Lord. Have mercy on my soul. Forgive me. At the moment of death, at least, come and pull me up." Pull me up where? God will say, "Where? Where is this up that you want me to pull you into?" Is it not right here, If I'm here?" God will ask, "Where on earth do you want me to pull you up? I'm not going anywhere. I've been here, around you, all the time. I've been inside you all the time. And yet you are saying, "Pull me up, pull me up, pull me up." God will go back confused. All that we have to give up is this obsession with our desires, whether it is for fame or name or possessions or wealth or whatever, or even to do good to others.

I think the biggest curse is the desire to do good to others, because there is rarely a person who wants to do good to others for the sake of the one to whom he is doing the good. They always do good for themselves. "Why are you charitable?" "No, no, sir. I was told that if you are charitable you will go to heaven." So, suppose I tell you that if you are charitable you will go to hell, would you stop being charitable, or would you not stop being charitable? I mean, you would run away from charity. So as Yagnavalkya says in that famous Upanishad, "Not for the sake of others am I good, but for the sake of myself," you see. And that is the cheapest and worst way of doing good. The so-called do-gooders, you know. It is a wonderful term in English, do-gooders. They imagine they are doing good to others in the desperate hope of doing some good to themselves, because they don't know any other way

of doing good to themselves. I would prefer that we stop doing good to others and try to do some good to ourselves, by making ourselves into what we should become. And the only way we can do that is to realize what true values we have to incorporate in our being, through living.

Rich people have lived and died unhappy. Beggars have lived and died miserable. Philosophers have lived and died miserable. According to tradition, even the lesser gods we call the *avatar purushas* have lived and died miserable. So who has lived and died happy? I hope some of us here will at least try for it. Because I heard long ago some wise man saying, "It is not how a man lives that matters. It is how he dies that matters."

Sahaj Marg surely promises us a good death in this sense that having died we don't have to bother about the future, because rebirth is another future. Having been through one life, I have created a future which is another life and in that I will create another future which is yet another life. Whose fault is it? I don't believe God has anything to do with this repeated birth after birth after birth. We are at fault because we still have latent desires, and in the hope of fulfilling them we come again and again. It is like somebody, you know, who is trying to read a book in all this noise, and suddenly he finds he is on page one hundred but he has not read anything. So he goes back to page one of the book all over again. And this time he comes to seventy-seven, and suddenly he realizes he has not read it. So he goes back to page one. This is rebirth. Rebirth is going back to page one every time you open the book, because nothing you have read there has entered here [points to head] or here [points to heart].

“Thou shalt not kill.” Wonderful. We are taught in lessons on morality, lessons of religion, “Thou shalt not kill,” one of the famous ten commandments. “Thou shalt not do this, not do that, not do that.” I have known children asking, “Then what should we do?” Today’s life is all negative. “You should not drink milk, you should not have coffee with milk, you should not have coffee with sugar. You should not have coffee at all, not in the morning, not in the evening, not in the day, not in the night.”

It is like this famous character in one of our Puranas, Prahlada’s father, Hiranyakashipu, who did *tapasya* [penance] for twenty thousand years, and Lord Shiva came, and he asked for a boon. He said, “I must not be killed by day or by night. I should not die inside a house or outside a house. No stone or metal or water or anything should kill me. I must not be killed by man or beast, by gods or devas or asuras.” How did he die? He was killed by an avatar of the Lord who was neither man nor beast. He was a man-lion, the Narasimha. He was not killed inside or outside but Narasimha seated himself in the doorway, which is neither inside nor outside. He was not killed in the air or on the ground but he was killed on the lap of God Himself. So our life is like that. No coffee, no coffee with milk, no milk without coffee, no sugar, no this, no that. Our life is full of it. And we call this dieting, we call it regimen in French, and we call it, I don’t know what else in which language, and we count our days with hope, thinking that at least in the blessed future we will be blessed, if there is a blessed future. So we have lost the art of living, because we have lost the present in our trying to grasp a future which is not yet, which will never be. Because the future is always in the future.

Live in the Present

So the lesson of Sahaj Marg is “Live in the present. Forget the future.” “How many years do I have to live?” Why do you worry? Are you alive now? If you are alive now, you should not worry about how long you’re going to live. Sahaj Marg, by closing your eyes and meditating, really meditating, teaches you that if you are not alive now, you are not going to be alive the next moment. It says emphatically, “If He is not here, He is nowhere, forget it.” It says even more emphatically, “If you do not realize that He is here, you are not going to find Him anywhere.”

So sisters and brothers, let us get on with...not with faith, I don’t believe in faith. What is faith? “Oh, I have faith that God exists.” But you don’t show it in your way of life. If you had faith that God exists, you would not be a liar and a cheat, and a murderer and a criminal, and a black money-maker and a do-gooder, would you? We are all liars. Nobody has faith in God. We know that He doesn’t exist. Therefore with impunity we are cheating, lying, murdering, robbing, making money from others, evading taxes. Our way of life proves that we are sure there is no God. How on earth are you going to find a God when you know for sure that He doesn’t exist? “No, no, how can you say that?” Because you’re living in a way which shows that you know God doesn’t exist. If you had the least faith that God exists, would you not curb your tendencies to evil and to harm others? Would you not think twice before you harm somebody else or hurt somebody else’s feelings? What is the answer?

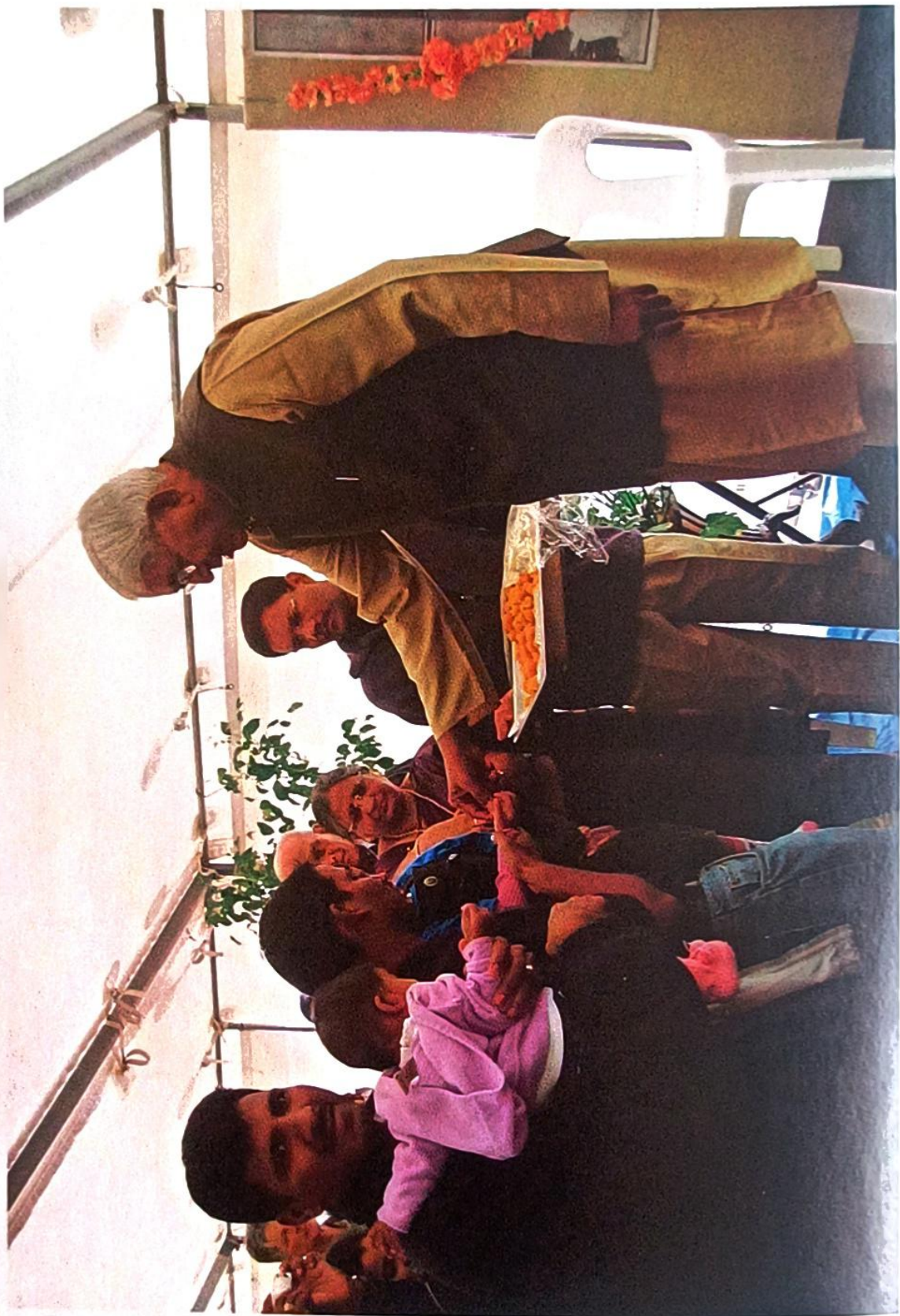
So, today our way of life is a testament to the fact that nobody really believes that God exists. I’ve heard people saying, “If God exists, why am I still alive? I should have been killed long ago by a God, you see.

No God can have mercy on me for all I have done. Therefore He doesn't exist. Or, if He existed once upon a time, today's world is too much for Him." He could handle one Ravana in a hundred thousand years, one Hiranyakashipu in another two hundred thousand years, but today, as we hear people saying, everybody is a Ravana, everybody is a Hiranyakashipu, and everybody is a Kamsa. So, which one of us will God come to eradicate? It is like cancer. Today's human population is a cancer on Nature. And like cancer inside our body, we are a cancer outside, and we're destructive and we're destroying everything including ourselves. I don't want to take too much of your time. We're already one hour into the New Year.

So I hope you will make the fullest use of your time in the present, for the present, knowing that, "What I am not in the present, what I don't have in the present, I may never have in the future." May Master bless us all.

Thank you.





2

Informal Conversation

Q: How long will casteism last?

PR: Maybe forever, who knows. There is casteism all over the world. Only thing is we don't call them Hindus, and Muslims, and what not. You have the Africans, the Moroccs...

Q: What about the untouchables?

PR: They don't exist. (Laughter) I am an untouchable. (Laughter) Because, they are all sitting away from me, two metres. (Laughter)

PR: You see the untouchable thing is for the protection of the people. Because, in the days when spiritual people were really spiritual, physical contact could create a shock, or damage to the system. It's a lot of danger. That is how it began, you see. But like everything else, it became...

I remember when Babuji was in Denmark first time in 1972, one girl was ironing his kurta and she got a shock. You know, she came running "Chariji, Chariji," I said, "What happened," she said, "Look at my hands." I said "There's nothing wrong." (Laughter)

One girl, I am telling another story, I think this was in, where we had the cottage for ourselves, on the day Don Sabourin passed away and they called me. One girl wanted to lie down in my bed. And she tried it and she felt so much vibration that she was almost afraid of dying. So, I told her separately, "Now you know why I can't have love affairs." (Laughter)

That's why Babuji you know, when someone wanted to touch his feet, he would pull his feet inside.

Q: You know one thing I did one day in Shahjahanpur, mentally I extended my hands to touch his feet, and he withdrew his feet. (Laughter)

PR: Generally, he could isolate the power, but sometimes you are caught off guard.

Q: Master, once you told me you can come Madeline, and then you said, *now* you can come. (Laughter)

PR: I am surprised of myself, you know. (Laughter) When we were in Courmettes, Jackie used to sleep in my room. And it had one door on the side and another on the staircase side, and we went to bed at half-past ten. And at 2 o'clock, he said he woke up and he found me missing. So he checked the doors, they were locked, both from inside. And he went to the bathroom. There was no light under the door. He said maybe no electricity,

Informal Conversation

so he opened the door and checked with flashlight. I was not there. Then he came back, I was still not in my bed. So, he was half asleep, half confused, you know. So he sat on the floor with his back to my bed, thinking where could this fellow have gone. And you know, he felt a little tired, and he put his hand like this, and there was Mr. Chari. (Laughter)

Q: And what did he say?

PR: He was frightened.

PR: You know in Satkhol, two people sleeping in my room. Vivek Mehta and Ganesh. And Ganesh thought I had gone to the bathroom because he heard a click. So he waited at the door. Five minutes...ten minutes... nothing happened. Then, Vivek Mehta got up, the boy from Delhi. He saw Ganesh standing there. He looked at the bed, I was missing. So he said, "Ah hah, Chariji is in the bathroom, I must also wait." So he came also, to the other side of the door and waited. And the door opened a bit – as if I opened from inside. And then nothing happened. They waited for a few minutes, four to five minutes, and then very timidly opened the door...nobody inside. Then they said what is this? He must be inside. So they look again. And they look at the bed, I am in the bed. (Laughter)

Q: Where did you go Master?

PR: I don't know, and now I am afraid at night to go alone in the bathroom. Suppose I open the door and I find myself inside. (Laughter)

PR: Have you seen the film "2001" by Arthur Clarke? Where Dave Bowman goes from the earth to the moon, and you know from the moon, he sees a monolith and he goes into it. And at one point, he sees himself sitting in a dressing gown at a table. And that man looks around you know, and it is himself. I don't want to see myself. Two, three instances like this you know.

Spirituality can be exciting to put it mildly, and frightening to put it in an extreme way. I have felt this, ours is a sort of a mild lunatic asylum. (Laughter)

PR: Babuji asked me to inaugurate the Bangalore ashram. I used to at night you know, see myself there in Bangalore. Not in a dream. I am there. Once I remember turning around, seeing myself in bed in Madras. I told Babuji, he said, "That is good, you are taking your work seriously." (Laughter)

It is possible to project yourself at another place by an act of will. When I went to sleep, I was thinking of Bangalore because it was my responsibility, and I was there. Now, I could have as easily been in Delhi, or Toronto or wherever. That is the first thing – that you can be in many places at the same time.

I think it was in 1968, Kasturi and Babuji had come to Madras, and they were in my house. Babuji left after five days. Kasturi was sick, so she stayed in my house for, I think, one month almost. I used to sleep upstairs in those days you know. And one night I was very concerned because she was not getting better and all the time she was in pain. Next morning Kasturi asked me, "Brother, you came down the stairs, then looked at the room and went away." So, it is possible that you

Informal Conversation

are seriously concerned about something and you are present there. There's nothing wonderful about it.

I had a dream, and very strange, you know, because I was with Babuji, and we start to walk, and we were both looking for Babuji. This is the dream, early morning in the ashram you know, I think day before yesterday morning. It was very surprising, Babuji and I both looking for him. I woke up at once. I am trying to figure out what could be the significance.

There is a very real danger, because in India, it is a well recognized fact that yogis leave their body to do some work somewhere you know. Somebody finds the body, thinks he is dead and they cremate it. Then, it is a disembodied soul, it becomes a ghost. That's why, the yogis, they lock themselves in a room and do this business. So nobody can come in.

Q: Is this the way ghosts are formed?

PR: This is one way. Another way is that they are too attached to the material life. Death comes but they don't want to leave.

Q: What does it do?

PR: Well, it does whatever it wants to do. There are stories. You know that society for psychic research in England, they have published many volumes. I have read one particular episode, where a gentleman was a heavy drinker of beer, and very material. He eats chicken and drinks beer. When he died, and they buried him at the bottom of the garden, frequently there was a ruckus at night. Then they discovered that if you

opened a bottle of beer and put it over the tomb, the noise will drop, subside. This is the idea behind all the post-material rituals for the dead, but they apply only to the very gross souls, who are earth bound. But abhyasis, hopefully, they won't even know that they have moved somewhere else.

You see, in a real transition, in a spiritual sense, there should be no consciousness of that change. It is as if you are here and there, both natural. You don't feel that you died and come here and things like that. You just move into another.

Q: Master, I heard that people have seen you in Kargil.

PR: Yeah, I said that that's where I must have caught a cold. (Laughter) The story goes that the returning soldiers, you know, from the Kargil centre – there was an abhyasi or a group of abhyasis in the train. And one of them was reading a book and the cover had my picture. So a soldier said – looking at the picture – “Who is this guy, because I have seen him all of last week in Kargil.” Good thing I was not arrested (Laughter). Military area you know. If I was caught there, they would have put me in prison, because they are generally protected areas. The people who make wars are really the generals, not the soldiers.

Q: Can you come to France this year?

PR: This is what they call a million-dollar question. (Laughter) Maybe after the summer. I am thinking of going to the States.

Informal Conversation

Q: In March?

PR: No, no. In March, I am going to Dubai and coming back. Then in April, if all goes well, I will be in Perth to lay the foundation stone for our ashram there. I will be back by around 15th. Then, 30th April will be Babuji's Birthday.

Q: Where will it be?

PR: Wherever I am. (Laughter) Maybe in Satkhol.

Q: States will be in May?

PR: May, June, then come back for July celebration.

Q: Babuji Maharaj birthday will be here?

PR: I don't know, there are no plans yet.

Q: One person asked me in flight, what I learnt in India. I said one is *patience* and *tolerance*.

PR: What is the other line of action? What did you say?

Q: ... (Laughter)

PR: You should have said tolerance and patience. (Laughter) First line of action is patience and tolerance, if that fails, then tolerance and patience.

Q: Three, four years now, this town is blooming, changing.

HeartSpeak 2003

PR: Everywhere in India, it is the same. It's all for good. Too much traffic, too many cars.

Q: Somebody was telling, from satellite you can see heavy patches of smoke in India.

Q: Asking about satellite picture of a bridge under water between India and Ceylon.

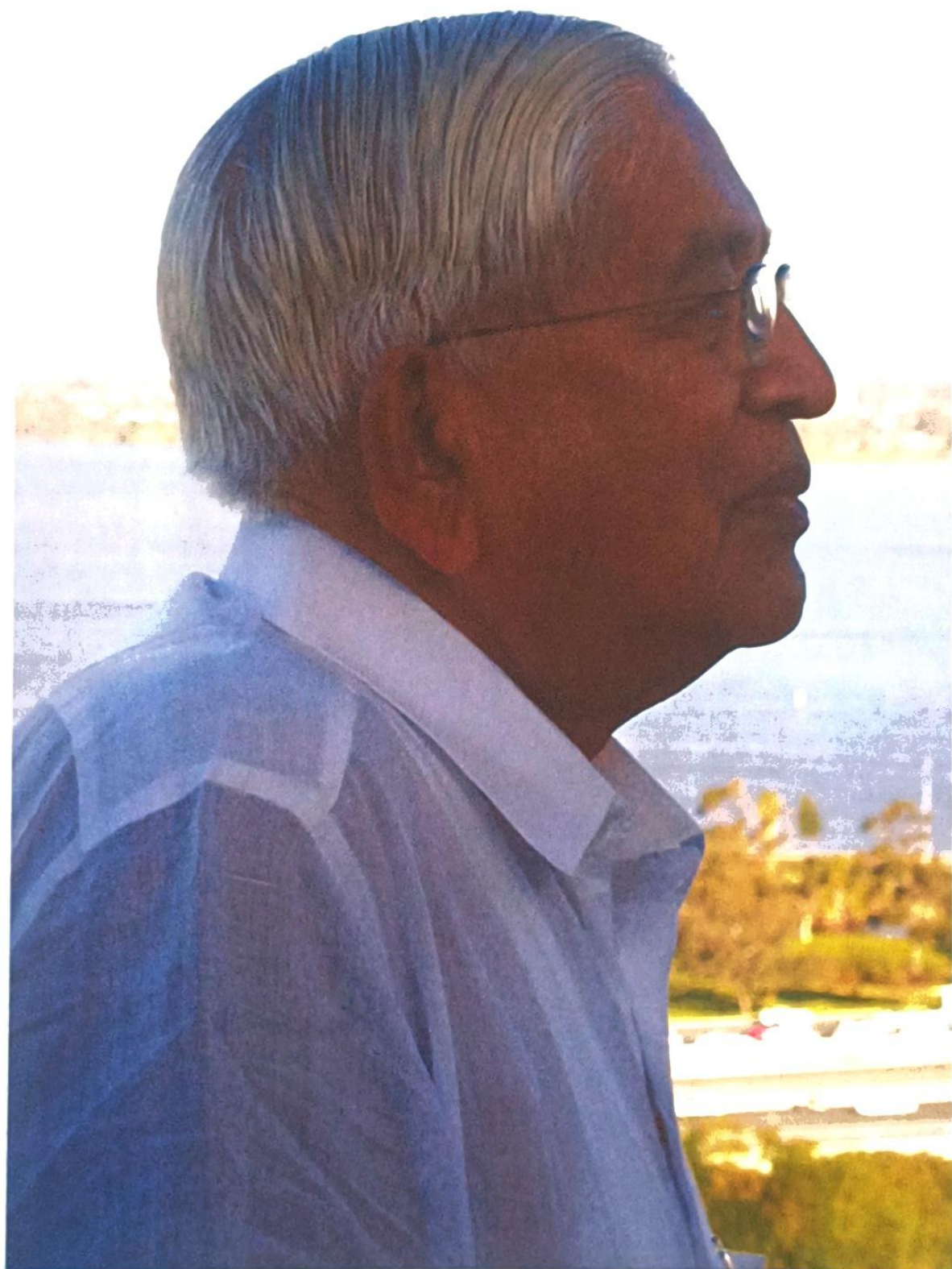
PR: It was interpreted. There must have been something there.

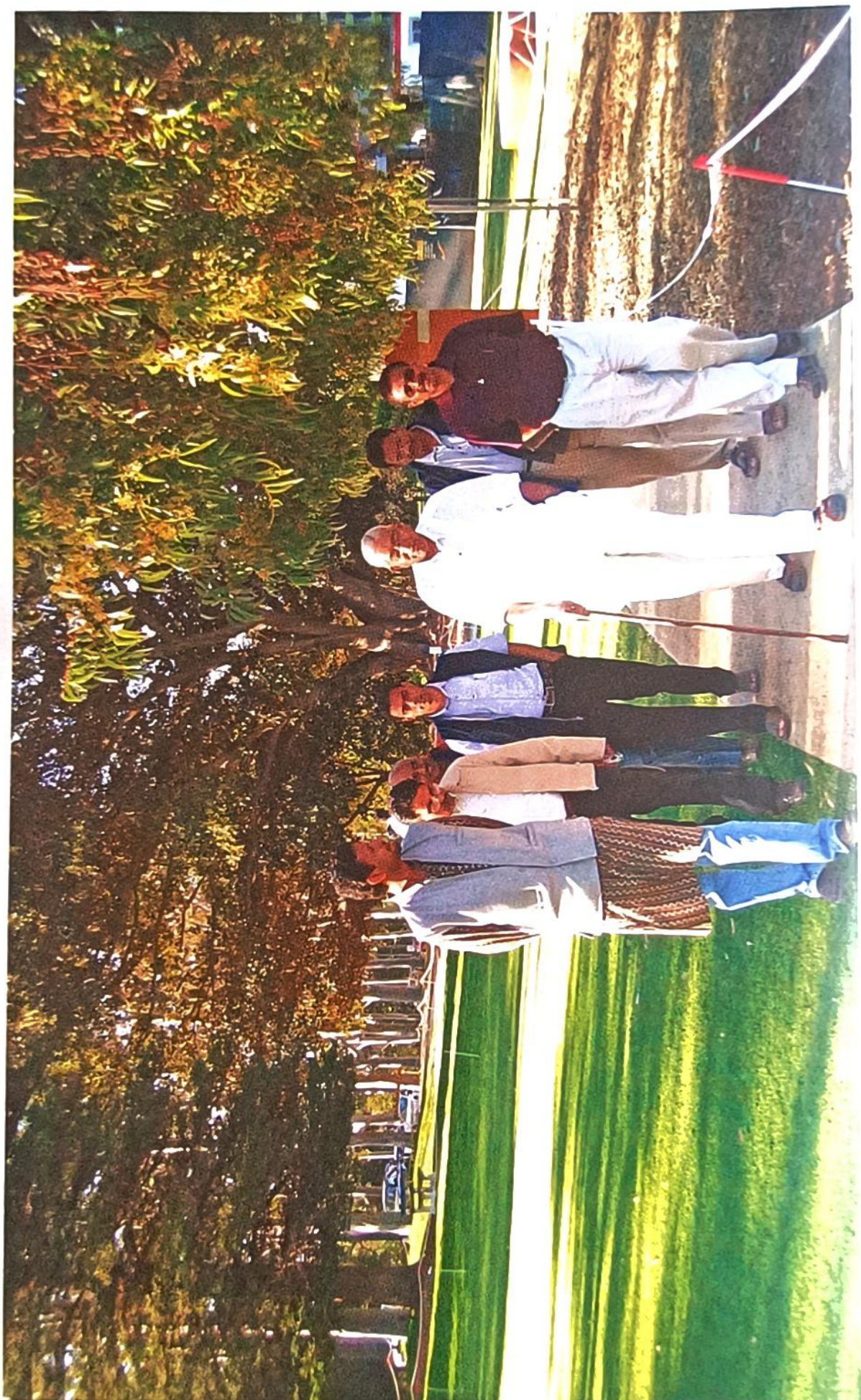
Q: Is there any special meaning to 2003, number five?

PR: What should it mean?

Q: You know, numerology.

PR: Maybe, there should have been five Italians here, only one now. (Laughter) You can say anything, you know.





Love and Discipline

Respected Sarnadji, my dear brothers and sisters, it is good to listen to good speeches. I have been inspired by my brother Raghvan's talk, and of course, I learn a lot from the speeches of brother Biksham. Not only Telugu, every time I listen to him my Telugu improves a bit, but I also learn Sahaj Marg. Because I can truly tell you that during my years with Babuji Maharaj, I was not really attentive to the teachings of Sahaj Marg as to the practice of Sahaj Marg. Of course, I started meditation, cleaning, and the evening prayer and I remember that, being a Viashnav Brahmin, we are supposed to be a very arrogant and haughty breed. I once asked Babuji, "What is the necessity of cleaning? I don't feel dirty at all." I asked this question twice actually during my discipleship. The first time he said in Hindi, "*Kya tum Lord ho ke tumhe safai ki jaroorat nahin padi?*" – he used to say Lord for everything that is of a higher nature – "Do you think that you are such a big man that you don't need cleaning?" That was the first occasion. On the second occasion, he said, "I like this attitude when an abhyasi thinks he is not unclean."

5th January 2003, Hyderabad, India

Because people, when they think they are unclean, bring more grossness upon themselves." So, you see, there are always two sides to every question and every answer. It depends on perhaps the inner attitude to the question, and the inner condition that stimulates a question to be asked of the Master.

I remember when we were in Cleveland in 1972, I had the privilege of accompanying Babuji Maharaj as his *sevak* [attendant]. He gave me a sitting one day and said, "Lalaji says, involve this boy in work, why are you wasting time?" Babuji answered Lalaji with a twinkle in his eye, as usual, "I am somewhat apprehensive of taking the risk with yet one more person." I asked Babuji, "What is this one more person business?" He became very sad and said, "You know, I have given work to so many people, they start off with a lot of promise, then their ego becomes involved in their work and there is degeneration until they fall. So, every time I take up a new person to train him for the work of the Master, there is this risk. And I was wondering whether I should take the risk in your case, but Lalaji says, 'Do it'. So in obedience to his wishes, I am starting." Then he said, "From today I absolve you from the need to meditate, but provided you give me that time that you will save by not mediating. You understand?" He removed the need for me to meditate provided I gave him my time. I cannot use it for going to the cinema and playing cards. That was only the beginning. Progressively, you know, more and more time was necessary to give to the Master's work – of course all this I have written in some of my books.

But what I mean to say is this: when I hear abhyasis say, "Sir, I have no time even to meditate, even to

do my cleaning,” it is not so much a question of disappointment, it is a question of sorrow – that people preoccupied with their mundane worldly matters do not recognize the importance of setting apart a mere two hours a day for their spiritual evolution – which is the maximum. If we follow the principle of Sahaj Marg – one-hour meditation in the morning, say half an hour cleaning, some prayer-meditation, that’s about it – two hours, maximum. So Babuji used to say, “Two hours out of twenty four hours, our aspiring *sadhakas* [practitioners] are not able to give me, though I can do it in five minutes, or in no time at all if their attitude is correct.” I asked Babuji Maharaj, “What is this business of two hours and five minutes and no time at all? And then you come down and say, ‘*attitude*’.” He said, “The attitude should be one of receptivity.” He said, “A baby is sleeping and mother is giving it milk; the baby receives without knowing that it receives. When it is a child of three, it receives knowing that it is receiving. This is the difference.” So, you see, when you get involved in this spiritual life, all the time that we have – starting with five minutes, ten minutes, twenty minutes – for our evolution, it has to be given up progressively to the Master’s work. Until, if one is fortunate enough, one is dedicated enough, one has the true vision to understand what is the purpose of spirituality on earth, what is the cosmic or divine plan, one lives for and by spirituality.

There are no *angas* [limbs] to spirituality. This artificial division of meditation, constant remembrance, cleaning, prayer at night – it is artificial. It is like saying that life consists of walking, breathing, drinking and eating. A dead person has none of these things. A living person has to do all of these things. One cannot live by

breathing alone. You see in the Christian tradition it is said, "Man does not live by bread alone." If you go to the Arab nations, the desert regions they will say, "Man lives by water alone." If you ask a *pranayami*, he will probably say, man lives by breath alone – b-r-e-a-t-h. But in spirituality, our brand of spirituality, Sahaj Marg, I would hazard a suggestion that *we live by remembrance alone*. And what is it that we remember? Our guru. Our great Master Babuji Maharaj, Lalaji Maharaj. And what is the function of remembrance? To me it has been initially something of a mental phenomenon, subsequently something of a state, which promotes emulation of the guru, his life, his activity, and finally it culminates in a possible identification of the self with the higher Self. Remembrance is purposeless if it does not achieve this final culminating goal of unification of the lesser self with the higher Self. So, when we remember, we must live by that remembrance. Most of us are just happy to admire, as Bikshamgaru said, "Admiration!" We admire. Oh! Babuji Maharaj is wonderful; he picked up every bit of rubbish lying on the floor and put it into a *koodapatra* [dustbin]; he wanted to know who was eating and who was not eating. All these are of course admirable. But, they are the external manifestations, the behavioural manifestations of an inner spirit, a loving spirit, which is concerned with the total welfare of human beings – physical, mental, moral, spiritual – *total* welfare. If a spirituality exists which says, I look only after the soul and not the body, I don't think it is complete. It is like a marriage where only the body is involved, and not the heart.

So you see, we progress from a partial approach to spirituality, starting with the four *angas* [limbs] of Sahaj

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Marg – meditation, cleaning, prayer-meditation, and constant remembrance, to a totality of emulation of the spiritual life of the great Master who has inducted us into this path. That physically we live like the Master, mentally we live like the Master, morally we emulate the Master, spiritually we must *become* like the Master. Without that, spirituality has no meaning.

When Babuji Maharaj used to tell me, “I do not want to charge money for feeding my abhyasis,” it was not some pious wish to do *annadaana* [donate food], of which we all had centuries of experience in this country. There have been saints who have been feeding the poor; there have been people like Kalikambliwala, who went on *yatra* [journey], to Badrinath where they had *chakkis* [grinding stone], blankets, and vessels for pilgrims. All this is of course *seva* [service], but is it spiritual? Every rich man has some time or the other fed the poor, given clothes, even cinema actors have done it. A former cinema actor, famous in Tamilnadu, who was also chief minister, was famous for distributing dhotis, but with his favourite colours red and black adorning the two borders, portraying his party. It was all selfish. Umbrellas during monsoon! They were all given with the intention of the glorification of his own self; increasing his power, increasing his popularity, increasing his hold on a public, which must feel abnegation and dependence on a spurious entity called a politician.

Babuji had no such intentions. His intention was – unless the body is capable, the mind cannot be capable. If you are sick, you cannot meditate, in fact Sahaj Marg forbids meditation when we have a fever, for instance. Babuji Maharaj said, “There must be minimum comfort for the abhyasis.” If they don’t sleep, they cannot

meditate, there must be a place to sleep; it was not charity of purpose, it was the strength of purpose. What is the strength of purpose? People believe that strength of purpose is a resolution, a resolve, and we always find such a resolution and such resolves are weak. Only the mentally weak make resolutions. The strong achieve their purpose. Strength of purpose to me means – adopting a purpose, which will give me the strength to carry it out. I cannot lift two hundred kilograms by having strength of purpose. I will be pressed under that weight. So when I have this strength of purpose, I am dependent on a power superior to myself, which must yet come within me and give me the paramount strength of doing my duty in His remembrance. Because in His remembrance, I see a frail old man who was forty-four kilograms in weight, and you know when he felt very happy after his bath, he used to measure his muscle like this and say, “*Dekho ungli mil rahi hai.*” [See the fingers are meeting.] And he could not believe himself when once in Europe we weighed him and found it was forty-eight. He said, “*Baap re baap, chaar kilo badh gaya!*” [Oh dear, I have gained four kilos!] which was almost, you know, ten percent more – childlike, not childish; innocent, selfless, total concern for the other, no concern for the self, for himself. His physical frailty was of no concern to him. His own lack of education was of no concern to him. What is the education worth, he asked me, if you cannot speak properly, morally, encouragingly, to put heart into the other people – *enthuse*. What is the value of a speech, which is *karnaamritam* [pleasing to the ears], as we say, but has no strength of purpose behind it, and does not send you out a different man from what he came into this tent as.

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He had these inner qualities of strength of purpose. And where did he get them from? If you asked him, he said, "It is all Lalaji's grace!" So it is like water being poured from one vessel into another, yet the vessel from which you pour remains full, the vessel that receives remains full, and when this vessel has to pour itself into another vessel, this remains full, that also remains full – *poornamadah, poornamidam, poornat poornamudachyathe*. In spirituality, in *only* spirituality, I may dare to say only in Sahaj Marg spirituality, can you give without depleting your own self. I know prefects who are concerned that when they transmit they may be weakening themselves. It is a big fallacy. Because Babuji Maharaj several times has said, "This is the only thing you can give and give and give endlessly, because you give nothing from yourself. You receive and transmit." It is called transmission precisely because it is not giving, it is transmitting. I receive and I allow it to pass through me, and that is transmission.

So you see, Sahaj Marg has to be properly understood. If we have to practice properly, and bring the necessary degree of dedication, devotion, forbearance, persistence – all these things have to be brought into this arena of Sahaj Marg – where we are apparently inactive; very purposefully active in meditation. Because as Babuji emphasized time and again, if there is no goal-consciousness in your meditation it is a futile exercise of closing your eyes and thinking of something else.

Brother Raghavan mentioned the necessity for love and discipline. He also made a beautiful suggestion that they are like two eyes of the human being. I agree entirely. Love without discipline is mere, what should I say, mushy emotion. It is useless, it has no force; it has

no power behind it. Love, to be purposeful, must have discipline behind it. Discipline without love deteriorates into authority – blatant use of power. Like Ravana, like Hiranyakashipu. Love without discipline, according to one of the stories I heard is what the gopis had for Krishna. And Krishna had ultimately to tell Udhava [his main disciple], you go and guide them in purposeful love. Now, they love me, no doubt about it. There is nobody who loves me like my *gopis*. But it is highly emotional, feeling-oriented love. It must be focused, like when you focus the rays of the sun through a magnifying glass you can burn wood. But there is so much sunlight falling on us and it doesn't burn anything.

So you see, if you have two eyes and one eye is gone – like my father had a tragic accident when he was eighteen or nineteen years old, he lost one eye. He told me that for six months, he could not put his pen into his inkpot, because he didn't know where it was. You need the two to focus. God did not give us two eyes purposelessly. It is called binocular vision. Without binocular vision, you cannot focus and locate. So without the twin, shall we say, spiritual equipments of love and discipline, we lose focus in our work. Babuji Maharaj has referred to this, when he told me of a case when he sat before an abhyasi, and wanted to raise him seven points. And when he had raised him three points, Lalaji, you know, intervened and said, what are you doing? Babuji said, "You know in my love for this man, I wanted to give him so much, but could he accept it, could he take it, could he contain it? It would have destroyed." Love should not destroy. Love should not destroy even in temporal love, even in marital love, in motherly love, in filial love. Love must never be destructive. Love

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must always conduce to the development of the person who is loved. On another occasion, when I entered Shahjahanpur, his house, I was at the gate, and Babuji looked at me and turned away. I was shocked. I thought something has happened on the way, some utter grossness and I am in *pataal lok* [underworld], you see. So I went and sat before him, wondering what has happened, why he turned away from me. He must have known my inner condition of turmoil and anxiety. He took me inside and said, "You know, when I saw you I was so excited, I wanted to give you everything I had. Lalaji said, 'Not now'." For a moment, I was annoyed. I said, "Why this Lalaji keeps interfering every time you want to give something?" Babuji said, "*Arre*, don't be foolish, but for his caution, I would have destroyed you." You cannot pour molten gold into a lead vessel, can you? You cannot pour molten iron into a clay pot, which has not been fired in the furnace, can you? You cannot pour hot water in the palm of your hand, what are you going to take of such spiritual wealth, which will destroy your nervous system when it just touches you. Babuji has cautioned time and again the idea of dosage in transmission. Proper dosage, like in medicine, you see. A good medicine is not necessarily better if you increase the dosage. You may end up where you don't want to go. So dosage is everything. When prefects say, "No, no, today I will raise you." You know, there have been prefects who said, "Sit in front of me today, and I will take you to the central region." Arrogance, ignorance – a combination of the two, make them bad prefects, make them useless prefects, and perhaps even useless abhyasis, useless to themselves.

So you see, we need all these attributes, human attributes; there is nothing divine in these attributes.

But without these human attributes of patience, perseverance, faith, love, devotion, and mostly love and discipline, where each balances the other – love balancing a discipline, preventing it from deteriorating into gross misuse of power and authority; discipline balancing love from degenerating into mere mushy nonsensical emotionalism. These are the human, absolutely human, behavioural characteristics that we need; attributes that we need, before we can embark on a voyage of becoming divinized. And until these attributes are seen in an abhyasi, believe me, his journey has not begun.

So I am very happy that our speakers are, in a sense, reawakening the necessity of proper understanding of what we are trying to absorb in Sahaj Marg – you, myself, everybody, you see. It is in Sahaj Marg that studentship never ends. No Master can cease being a disciple. The day he stops being a disciple, he stops being a Master too. Babuji was always a disciple. His every fourth word was Lalaji Maharaj, "*Lalaji ki barkath hai, Lalaji ki marzi hai, Lalaji ki krupa hai,*" [It is Lalaji's Grace, It is Lalaji's wish,] you know. Not for nothing, because without Lalaji, there was no Babuji, and may I say without Babuji, I am not here too, you see.

I pray that all of you will look into Sahaj Marg – not into the books, which we are publishing more and more, but into your heart. Because understanding is not an intellectual thing, it is in the heart that the true understanding resides. And unless we look into the heart, there will be no understanding. We may understand in a superficial, intellectual way, but we will never understand with the heart the need for practice, to develop humanity in ourselves, as Babuji

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Maharaj said, "From animal man to human man." It is the most essential step on our path. If this path is not covered, like the Trivikrama-avatara [Lord Vishnu's incarnation as a dwarf], we will have to give our head before the foot of God and we would probably plunge into another *pataal* [underworld]. I pray that no abhyasi should ever have to face such a situation, that he will walk gloriously on the path, from animal man to human man, to divinized man by His grace, by His love for us, by His compassion, by His mercy, and most of all by His eternal service to us. Thank you.

Giving With the Heart

I have been thinking what to say. Kannan and John have been speaking about the work, and loving the Master, making Him your goal and so many things. It seems to me, that proximity is necessary. Now proximity means closeness, you know. Unless you are close to something, you cannot appreciate it. If you cannot appreciate it, you cannot like it, if you cannot like it, you cannot love it. I mean, step by step.

So when we say, my Master, my Mission, my method, I have spoken maybe twenty years ago about three types of abhyasis. One abhyasi is wedded to the Mission. He doesn't care much for the practice or the guru. He says, "I am serving the Mission." They will come, they will sweep the floor, they will do work in the kitchen. You will find them everywhere – good *sevakas* [volunteers] in the sense of those who offer good service, not servants, service. But they don't seem to make the grade, you know. They are volunteers all their lives. They never get close to the practice. They say, 'Sir, I am doing my work. I am a karma yogi'. But karma yoga does not only

9th February 2003, Zonal Ashram, Bangalore, India

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mean sweeping the floor and peeling the tomatoes or the carrots, shelling the peas. What is the true karma that is expected of an abhyasi? You know, the Gita talks of *svakarma* [own action], but unfortunately, there it goes based on religion – because the *svadharma* [own religion] of the Vaishya, of the Shudra, of the Brahmin, the Kshatriya [caste divisions].

Now in Sahaj Marg these divisions don't enter. According to Babuji Maharaj, my Master, there is only one *svadharma* – that is to evolve. Born in any situation in life, from the lowest, what is traditionally in the Hindu culture is called the chandala, you see; even from there you have to evolve. The arrogant Brahmin who thinks he is the highest, from there too you have to evolve. Because, in this highest, in this lowest, there is no spiritual difference. It is only a difference of caste. A difference of what the society thinks of you. One is touchable, one is untouchable. One recites the Vedas, one does not. That is about all the difference there is between the Brahmin and the Chandala. Whether the Brahmin understands anything more about what he is reciting all his life is a moot question.

In fact, I believe, there is a statement somewhere that the Brahmin, who goes on reciting the Vedas without understanding the meaning, will be reborn as a frog. Because the frog is going on, you know, all its life, [makes the croaking sound of a frog] and there is also another saying that the frog, because it cannot keep quiet, attracts the snake, which will eventually kill it. So the Brahmin, in a sense, who goes on empty recitation of Vedas is attracting death. So you see, this caste business, there is no higher or there is no lower as far as spirituality is concerned, and in my mind there is

no higher or lower in any case. It is our own artificially created division of society into layers.

Be that as it may. Svadharma only means in this context, my duty to myself, to evolve to the highest possible. Are we in proximity to this duty? Suppose somebody says, "No, no, sir, I am always in my office promptly at 9 o'clock. I never bunk, I am always there till half past six. I am a karma yogi." I don't think he is a karma yogi, because first of all he is not a *nishkaama karmayogi* [one who works without attachment to the result]. He is a *svarthi* [selfish]. He is earning money. If you do anything for money, it is *svarth* – selfishness. So that is gone you see, it is off the scene of karma yoga. Then what are you? You are only a servant employed, maybe for ten rupees an hour or a lakh of rupees an hour. It does not matter. You are still a servant. So there is no karma yoga in doing your office work or teaching in school or I don't know, whatever you see, clearing the garbage. So there is no svadharma, there is no svakarma. The Brahmin who is a priest and goes on making money in temples, taking money for social service, which should be service but not work you know – officiating at the birth of a child, officiating at the death of somebody, sending him on his way so to speak – again it is all for some *dakshina, dakshina, dakshina* [gift given to a priest]. He is also a servant. So the one who clears the garbage, the one who is cleaning the streets, the one who is cleaning the refuse, the one who is muttering his mantras, the high-tech bosses, the low-tech bosses, they are all servants.

So where is svakarma or the nishkaama karma [desireless action] today? It doesn't exist. Are you evolving simultaneously at least? Somebody may say,

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“Sir, I was a useless fellow in Malgudi – I am just taking a name from R.K.Narayan’s novel, you see. It doesn’t exist. I am a poor fellow from Malgudi, but today I own three companies, I have evolved!” Has he evolved? He has become richer, but he has not evolved. The professor says, “Sir, I was a useless fellow in one of the Tanjore villages. My father used to be a cattle owner or a farmer. But today I am a professor of, let us say, space physics, don’t you think I have evolved?” No! You have become more knowledgeable, you have become more intelligent, but you have not evolved. Third person says, “Sir, I was a weak fellow, weighing forty pounds at the age of eighteen. And today, you know, I am Mr. Universe, like that you know, haven’t I evolved?” I am sorry, you have evolved in the same way as a pig, which has been fattened for the market, nothing more than that.

So physical evolution, mental growth, monetary, economic growth, these are not signifying evolution at all. On the contrary, as we see in our society in the last thirty years, all these methods, or so-called avenues of, shall we say, evolution. Indian society is evolving from poverty to richness. This evolution is in a different sense and unfortunately, such evolutions are always or most often accompanied by a certain degree of degradation – the degree of degradation depending on the means adopted in that special way of evolution. A businessman who cheats and makes a lot of money, even in his riches he is not evolving because they are made by wrong methods.

So you see proximity to work also does not bring you too much proximity to the place, the Mission, proximity to the work, the karma associated with the Mission.

So what is it that can? We come from the Mission to the method. In the method there is more, a personal impact. When we clean the floor, we are cleaning it for the prefect, or your so called Master, for getting a good name. When you keep Bangalore clean, you are doing it for the government, let us say.

But, when you practice the method, when you are close to the method, when you understand it, appreciate it, practice it with devotion, dedication and what is more important, regularity, sincerity, as John Barlow said, is essential. But sincerity is not what Indians understand by sincerity. Here it is a mixture of the jumble of loyalty and friendship and all sorts of funny things. Sincerity in its original roots only means 'without giving up', which means continuous, *anant*, day after day, meditation after meditation. That is sincerity.

Sincerity to the practice means unbroken practice, as one of the Upanishad says, *tailadhaara*. You know when you put water, pour it out, it breaks up into droplets. Oil will not break. It goes in a continuous stream. It is called *tailadhaara*. If you practice in that way you become closer to that man or the person who offered that practice to you. And as you see the changes in yourself, again to repeat John, you begin to first feel closer to the Guru, later to respect him more and more, because He is doing so much for you through the practice that you are practicing, later to love Him, because now you begin to love yourself.

Let me assure you, nobody can love the Master who cannot love himself or herself. Self-hatred can never lead to love of the Master. That is why to avoid feeling guilty about anything is so important in Sahaj Marg. Babuji Maharaj said, "Okay, you have done something

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and it merits feeling guilty," but he said, "It is wrong to feel guilty." Because whatever has happened has happened. Guilt is not going to solve the situation or resolve whatever has to be done. Leave it behind. It is already in the past. Let it be in the past. "Let the dead past bury its dead," there is a saying. Leave it where it has gone. Now make amends. How do I make amends? By not repeating the same thing again and again. As Babuji said, only way of repentance is not to repeat one's mistakes.

So now comes, you see, the process of something which grows towards gratitude in the sense that, when you understand that whatever has been done, the guru still offers his practice to you, which can only be because he loves you. He does not say, "Stop, you cannot practice anymore. You are unfit." I have never heard Babuji saying that you are unfit for this practice. On the contrary, he said, without the practice, you will continue to go down more and more. "Take it up even now." "But Sir, I am unfit." He said, "Nobody is unfit who is willing to practice." So you see without willingness if you practice there is no use. Just because your uncle comes or your niece comes, you also come, that is society. That is going to a club or a cinema you see, or to what Indians are fond of saying, pass-time, from which the word pastime comes.

So when you see these changes, which the guru continuously gives, he is sincere because there is no break in his service, without breaking, without giving up. Without giving up, he continues to serve you, whatever maybe your situation in life when you begin, Chandala or Brahmin. It matters nothing to him. You are a human being. There is a human soul in you, a

divine soul, and to bring it up I wouldn't say it is merely a duty, it is a loving duty. So when we see that the guru, day after day, hour after hour, minute after minute, satsangh after satsangh, he is willing to give his all to us, and when by proximity to the work... which means applying it to myself. In nothing else which I explained before do we apply it to ourselves. We may clean the streets, but we are not clean; we may teach others, but we are not educating ourselves. Here we are applying it to ourselves and then giving it to others. So you see there is the dual aspect of self-development leading to other development – development of others. Then this enormous feeling of gratitude comes, that who must this person be, who, irrespective of what I am, where I am, how I am, is willing to go on giving sincerely, without break, without giving up, and then love begins.

So there are several ways of beginning to love. But I think that which will be eternally loving, the person who will eternally love is the one who has grown with the Master's help, through the Master's practice, in the Master's Mission, into progressively more and more lovable stages. That is why, in spiritual growth, there cannot be any arrogance. I cannot say, oh, I am becoming this and this and this.

Yesterday, somebody in his talk said, Babuji called several people saints. Correction. He addressed only one person as saint in his life and that also he later on regretted. He had done something for the person to merit being called a saint. But unfortunately, you know, it is like a king. When you take off the crown, he is no more a king. But in spiritual life, the spiritual growth, the spiritual inner evolution, can never be destroyed. And when we see that eternal unchanging verity, as we call

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it, represented by the Master, producing in us sincerely without giving up, without breaking its service, we (being what we may be), then this love begins, because I see in myself a reflection of Himself beginning to get more and more clear, distinct, perceptible, until one day I see Him inside me. And at that stage you cannot distinguish love of the self from the love of the guru or God. Therefore, Babuji always said, "It is the Self that you see when you look for God." So you go around a complete circle, you see. You start with the self, which is a self with the small 's' and you end with the Self which is a self with the capital 'S', which is no more 'this', but it is yet 'This'. And that is the miracle of spiritual transformation, the growth of spiritual love, the growth of a love which will be eternal, be it whether in the body or not. This love will carry you through eternity, because love is the only thing that goes through eternity. I mean it is a fact of science that without space there is no time. Nothing can move over space without moving in time too, isn't it? Except of course certain very profound facts of science, which we need not discuss here. There is no relevance, like thought.

Thought can move from one corner of the universe to the other in no time at all, but thought is not the physical substance. Similarly, love can move from this corner of the universe to the other corner in no time at all. And if your thought conveys love or if you have loving thoughts, it is a proven fact that this love will be felt wherever you are directing it, and that is our transmission. There has been a lot of speculation about what is it that is transmitted. If you wish to make a secret of it, it is a secret. But it is so obvious to

everybody that it can be and it can only be divine love. It is everywhere. It is cause of creation, not only of the individual human being or whatever it is, but at the very universe itself. That is what transmission is. When Babuji says using the divine, what is it called, power, for the transformation of man, be assured that nothing can transform you, except love. If you want to train your child, train it with love. You want to educate somebody, educate with love. This (shows stick) is no use. I use it, but in another way, you see.

So without love, there is no transformation and without love, there is no transmission because unless somebody loves you they are not going to be interested enough in you to change you. Therefore, 'Love Him who loves all' – number one. I did not change it as another speaker said yesterday. I added another slogan to it, because I found that while everybody says 'I love the Master,' they are not able to love themselves.

Satsangh means being together in one spot with the eternal presence and like in a family, your mother likes you to love your brother and your sister. In the satsangh your guru also likes you to love your brothers and sisters. And if you say, you love the Master and you don't love those whom he loves, it is a lie. You cannot possibly love the Master and not love your brother or your sister. So I added, 'Love all whom He loves'. If you cannot love for your own sake, love at least for his sake. This is why you find even in families, that as long as the mother is alive, the family sticks together. They may have so many internal dissensions, problems. But as long as she is alive, even if she is ninety-five, the brothers will come together, the sisters will come together. Some harmony is retained. That old lady's

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head is gone in the sense that she pops off, the family is scattered, because there is no loving force holding you together. What gravity is to the physical universe, love is to the human world. Without love, humanity cannot be held together. If a family cannot be held together, how can a society be held together? How can a nation be held together? How can a world be held together? So you see it is of paramount importance that we learn to love, and you cannot love, as I said, unless you are able to love yourself. And you cannot love yourself possibly because no human being can love himself or herself as she is or as he is, because there is so much inside that we cannot possibly love.

Now if you don't take steps to rectify this and change yourself, you project this inner hatred of yourself on others. And you hate persons, you hate societies, you hate countries, you hate the world and eventually you hate God. So if you want to transform the world and make it a world of harmony and peace and love, begin with yourself. All the politicians of this world can do nothing. All the atom bombs and I don't know what, all missiles the Americans have, they can do nothing except produce more and more hatred, more and more dissension, more and more division. It would be good if the Bushes and the Musharrafs and the Vajpayees can practice meditation. Bring, let us say, truce on this earth for five years, there will be no war for five years. And everybody will meditate and at the end of five years, you will say, 'What truce? We had a truce, what for?' 'No, no, but you hated, you know, you were bombing Iraq, and Iraq was thinking of bombing you.' 'But I never thought so.' They don't even remember that they hated. Of course, fortunately I have one, Bajpai is here,

but the real Vajpayee is missing, you see! So wherever we go, we should try to make this message clear you see, that while spirituality is a totally personal concept of evolving yourself into the highest, unless those around you also evolve, it is no good.

India in the past made this very tragic mistake in my opinion that its rishis went into obscurity and oblivion. They didn't care about society. So, India has remained unspiritualised. Religious, yes. Unspiritualised, also yes. Vehemently so.

Today, we are swinging in the other way going totally to material and people like my Master have to come and re-awaken a sense of spiritual growth in us and say, "Yes, make your money. Do everything that you have to do. But remember, that is only one-half of life." The other half is the spiritual life. The rishis of yore neglected the material half, went into obscurity, worked for themselves, became rishis, maharishis, divyarishis, devarishis [levels of rishis], I don't know what else. What did they do for society? Nothing.

What are our millionaires doing for society? By contrast, I would say, something. They are at least giving money for charity. The Indian Institute of Technology, you know, alumni are sending money from abroad. Recently I read one man gave ten million dollars or five million dollars donation to IIT, Delhi.

It is good people are beginning to part with their strengths in whichever direction it may lie. You are well educated, you must teach. Because your strength is in that field. You are physically strong, you must help the weak. You are economically strong, you must help the economically weak. The strong must always help the weak. That is duty. That is also a way of showing our love.

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Now the students of these famous institutions are beginning to realise, but for their education in IIT, Delhi or Bombay or wherever, they would not be making twenty million dollars a year today in U.S., so they say, let me offer my gratitude. Very much like you give your donations here. "But for you I would not be in a job." "He may earn twenty million, but I earn twenty rupees. Even this twenty rupees, I would not make. So, take four *annas*." That is why, in religious ritual, it says *yathaashakti* – according to capacity you must help. A millionaire must not give one rupee, it is better he keeps it, like you don't offer two grains of rice to a beggar at your door. He will say, "You keep it, you need it more." I have known beggars refusing today one rupee. They say, "Sir, I think you need this money more. You keep it." And he is right because what can he do with a rupee?

So, you have to look at the person to whom you are giving. You have to look at your capacity to give. Match. That's why rajas and maharajas, you see, in cinemas, they take off a pearl necklace and give it. In Mahabharata series, the girl comes to announce the birth of a child. The raja takes off one pearl necklace. "Is it beautiful?" "He is like your majesty." Another pearl necklace. Because a king cannot give one rupee. If he is a king, he must give in a kingly way. If you are a teacher, you must not teach for money. You must teach with your love because education cannot be withheld. And a teacher, who does not teach, is a lie.

A lamp must shine. If it does not shine, it may be a golden lamp, but it is no lamp. Nor can it shine only for you. So wealth is like that, you know. Health is like that. Riches are like that. In you, but not for you. It is like one of these girls saying, I want this lamp only to

illuminate my table. It cannot do it. Light the lamp, you benefit but let the light be enjoyed by others too. That is also generosity.

I remember in the Mahabharata serial, one day when I think Krishna was singing, Radha tells him, "You must today play the flute only for me." He says, "My dear, I play only for you, but everybody listens because a flute is a flute." It is not like these modern contraptions. You put earplugs into yourself and enjoy only yourself. You see, now the travesty that we are bringing in society that we have created things only for an individual. Music I can keep in my pocket and put it in my ears and I only enjoy it, nobody else. And you see, this man smiling and nodding his head and people think he is mad. And this is what happens when you personalise nature's gifts with yourselves and you are either power mad, intellectually mad, or physically mad. So, distribution of nature's gifts is the law whether it is spiritual, mental, material – it does not matter. And sincerely – that is, not stopping, not stopping to judge, is this beggar worthy of my gift? A beggar is a beggar. What is the worth in a beggar that you must distinguish him from another beggar? Just because he is looking more handsome than this beggar? Do you give a beggar because he is handsome? I don't know if girls do it. But a beggar is always a beggar. And even in love, you know, they say, he was a beggar at her door. Like Babuji used to praise the story of Laila Majnu. So, you see, when this love grows, love imposes on us from within ourselves a compulsion to go on giving and that giving cannot stop.

And Babuji said one very good thing, very great thing, a very generous thing, divinely generous thing

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because the divinity itself can only do this. That giving never stops. Not because you have it, but because nature says, here is a fit vessel for distribution. Let me give more and more. So through giving we receive. Do we keep anything? It is like asking a river: Do you keep any of the water that is flowing through you? The river would say, "Absurd, because you can see the water is here." "Yes, but it is all flowing away." But the river says, "Damn fool, if it is not flowing, how would it remain here? It would dry up."

So take a lesson from the river. Whether it is a Kamini here or a Kaveri there, let it flow. Because when it flows abundantly, generously, nature replenishes and sees that there is no lack. This is the secret of true giving, with the heart, giving uninterruptedly, giving to anyone and everyone without judgment. That is how nature gives. That is how we must give.

So these are some of the thoughts which came and I thought I should exchange with you. I am sure that through practice, you will all evolve.

I must make an observation, which several people have shared with me. It is like cold water cannot cook. Every woman knows this. Because I know in some families, the husband is angry that the lunch is not ready. And she says, "The gas is not there. What can I do?"

"What is wrong with the gas? Can't you cook without the gas."

"Fire will not burn."

"So what?"

"Water will not boil. Without boiling water, how can I cook?"

"Fry something."

“But oil has to be heated too.” Isn’t it?

“Roast something.”

For that also we need a fire. We need fire for cooking, and here we are cooking ourselves in a sense. That is why this process is called *tapasya*: *tapaha* – heat.

Many people believe that Bangalore centre is very well organised and I share that view. [Claps] But I find something lacking here you see. [Laughter]. And that something is fire. That fire is lacking. We all come, we meditate routinely, we eat the *halwa* or the *thuppa* or whatever is given. We pay our token money, three rupees. We pay thirty rupees for the bus. We come from there to here. We sit in a very regulated fashion. But is this discipline the true discipline of an inner heart or the passive discipline of an unthinking public?

Often you know people say Karnataka is fit only for retired people. I am happy that Bangalore is waking up to hi-tech – probably because we have large imports from other states. But this is not a joke that the fire is lacking – what Babuji used to call madness, madness of love, *deewangi*, *prem deewani*. How can you be a lover and sit there, you know with your head in your hands, thinking of your lover and the lover is on *uyyale* – the swing – playing the flute. “No, no, sir, I love Him.” “But Krishna is playing there. What are you doing here?” “No, no, I am a passive lover.” In love, there is no passivity. There must be this inner longing, this craving you know, dying for, shall we say union. And if the fire is lacking, of course love will carry you, but will carry you alone. This final merger with Guru or with Divine or with the Self, that is the last stage, you see. Laya [merge], the layavastha [mergence] can be achieved by the burning fire of love, in which you

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are willing to destroy yourself. And even at the risk of destroying yourself, you must have this union with the Divine. How that is going to be created, I don't know. Because each one of you have to create it in yourself. But certainly, it is lacking.

Unfortunately, I find in Uttar Pradesh, for instance, you know, there is a lot of that. But together with indiscipline. They run like, you know, wild donkeys, not minding the dust, not minding so many things – trampling the grass, trampling on the seedlings and that is the Brindavan tradition that the Gopis ran.

We have to have a balance you see – that there is a fiery, burning all-consuming love, yet discipline – that Radha can come sedately, outwardly a girl of great sensitivity, shyness, sobriety, gently walking to her lover, but inner, you know, soul dancing, eager to burst forth – throw away all bonds and be there instantly. This balance you have to strike.

So, please work on it. People say by his blessings everything will occur. Yes, of course. But provided you want it. So I think that is all I have to say.

Thank you for patient listening and may you all grow.

Don't Ask, Just Be

That was an excellent story by Sister Jayshree-*ben* — a story with a great lesson for all of us. These *bhajans* [devotional songs], you know, this girl sang so beautifully, but again you know, Babuji Maharaj used to say that every time we sing of *mukti* and liberation, and this and that, all this is also wrong, in a sense. Wrong means, as a *gaana* [song] it is wonderful, but this craving for liberation — *mukti*, Babuji said, why? Why are we seeking to run away from life? What is there that is going to be in *mukti* that we don't find here? How do we know that when we get there, we should not prefer to come back here again? I mean it is not a joke. It's a very serious thing because Babuji Maharaj asked me these questions himself. So he said, you know in one sense we are always afraid of the unknown and, in another sense, we are always *longing* for the unknown — and this is contradictory. We are afraid of the unknown; we are longing for the unknown. Both are unknown, and we don't know whether that which we are afraid of would be good for us, and whether that which we are longing for would be bad for us.

25th March 2003, Ahmedabad, India

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So I asked him what should be our attitude to life. He said "Live." How to live? "Live."

When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't want to be destroyed. It likes to live as a seed. But life cannot be expressed without the covering of the seed being destroyed by being put into the earth; then only life springs out. So, at each stage, something has to go, something has to come out. Up comes the seedling — that has to go; then the sprout or whatever it is, you know, stage by stage: the plant, the tree, the fruit, all over again the seed. And we now have neither the wisdom nor the knowledge to know what we have to be, what we are going to become, what the plan that Nature has for us, is. So we are always bewailing our past and we are always longing for a future which should not be the present. "I was happy; I am not happy. I will be happy; I am not happy." And Babuji went to the extent of saying that this is one of the greatest, shall we say, expressions of ingratitude for life itself, because life is *now*, not in the past, not in the future.

And he did not like people coming here to run away from life. I think he emphasized the fact that Sahaj Marg is a *grihastaashrama* [life of a householder], mainly to emphasize that we cannot run away from life. *Sannyasis* are escapists. They want to be fed; they want to be clothed without working for it; they want to have all the joys of life without working for it, without living for it, and they want all the fun of life without taking any responsibility for it. Just say, "*beta* [son]" and "*beti* [daughter]" and "*aayushmaan bhava* [may you live long]" and "*keertimaan bhava* [may you be renowned]" and all this rubbish.

Life is a serious business — if you take it lightly! There is no serious purpose in life at all. We are not

here to protect, we are not here to cherish. We are here only to love — love life; what the French call *joie de vivre*, the joy of life we must express, you see. And I don't mean in any bohemian or bacchanalian sense, but in being grateful that *life is*. Life is not to be qualified or quantified. "Oh, if I live sixty years I will be happy," or "If I am a millionaire I'll be happy," or "If I am a *sannyasi* I'll be happy," or "If I am a Lata Mangeshkar I'll be happy." *I am, therefore I am happy.*

What that great French philosopher is supposed to have said, "I think, therefore I am," is wrong. I am, therefore I am happy. I am happy that I am; and I am and I will always be, because that which can say "I am" will never cease to be. But that which is always wanting to be either in the past or in the future, is not in the present. Therefore, in a sense it doesn't exist at all. Therefore, people who are always harping on the past or expecting from the future, are really not here. They miss life because they are neither grateful nor do they know what to aspire for, like the poor trees. They have their own expectation, and we do not know that our purpose is something which we can never know until we have come into a fruition of our expression.

Who could ever say at the end of his or her life that, that was what he or she wanted to be? Did an Einstein know that he was going to be an Einstein? We all know his story: he was a school dropout; he was labelled as unintelligent, and he went on to be one of the greatest scientists, sitting in a patent office. Did a Vivekananda know he was going to sort of, you know, rock the world? Did a Buddha know he was going to be what he was, what he became? He was after all born as a prince, and his parents would have wanted him to be

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a great emperor, have some more conquests, add some more lands, have many queens, have many princes and princesses. And he ended up, perhaps in the eyes of many people, a beggar; but he ended up in the eyes of posterity, one of the greatest saints on earth.

Our purpose is to exist so that the purpose will be *revealed*. And what is that revelation? It is not some voice going to speak from the top of the world, or from the heavens, or from a burning bush, which all is blah-blah. Excuse me, but I am not trying to decry any religions, but whether it is Veda or the Talmud or the Bible, all blah-blah. Christ's fulfilment was in being crucified. Without the crucifixion there was no Christ, there was no Christianity. Anybody would agree with this. Had he said, "No, no, I don't want to be crucified. I have not come here to have pain," God would have said, "*Theek hai* [All right], live as a nice carpenter, make boxes, make coffins, marry a nice Jew."

So you see, we cannot ask, we cannot demand, we cannot expect. Therefore, I gave the eleventh commandment: Expect not, for thou shalt not be disappointed. And I can add: When we are not disappointed, we are appointed!

So, we have to live in the present, for the present that we shall receive, which we are ever receiving, which is the gift of life; and how that life will express itself, we don't know. One seed becomes another seed, but in the process, it is wheat or it is rice or it is a mango or it is a human being, because after all we are also seeds, producers of seeds, sowers of seeds. Human beings don't only sow seeds of *gehun* [wheat] and *atta* [flour]; we also sow seeds of human beings. Isn't it? And when Christ said, "Go forth and multiply," what did he

mean? Did he mean sowing the seeds into the soil or did he mean sowing the seeds of humanity, sowing the seeds of bliss, of joy, of happiness, of enlightenment, enfoldment? — what? Everything and nothing, because, like the waves of the ocean, realization goes on and on.

There cannot be a point when we say, “I have realized.” I have realized that there is much more to realize. That is the only truth. I have become, to know that I have to become much more. What I shall become, I don’t know. But to become anything at all, I have to exist, and I exist in the present. Let me, therefore, be in the present, live with the present, love with the present, spread love with the present, light in the present.

I believe this is our purpose. *Mukti* and all this sort of fantasy is very much a fantasy. I once told Babuji Maharaj, “You know, I shall be really happy to be in the brighter world.” He said, “What will you do there?” I said, “Whatever you do there, I will do there.” He said, “But our purpose may be different. I may be sent back again. Who is going to send me back? I don’t know. Maybe I will send myself back.”

As you all said, I am here as a surprise. Who sent me here? Nobody. I need not have come. Isn’t it? Yet, I have come. In a sense, I have come by my own volition. In a sense, I have been sent here. In a sense, I have been probably pulled by you all. Which sense is right and true, I don’t know. The fact is I am here, you are here and we are happy to be together.

So, I pray it shall always be so; let us always be together and let us grow together, reach our fulfilment together, realizing that fulfilment doesn’t end whether it is material or spiritual. No material aspirant has ever been happy with the millions he has earned, he wants

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more. No person who says he is happy is ever happy, because he wants more. Isn't it? "I am happy if I have twenty lakhs." When he has twenty, he says, "No, no, two hundred." When it is two hundred, he wants two thousand. A man who has lived to sixty years says, "Sixty is only middle age."

I am always happy to tell the story of an old gentleman who used to telephone me every year on his birthday. He was eighty-four when he telephoned me and said, "Master, today is my birthday." I said, "*Mubaarak ho*. [Congratulations.]" He said, "I want a birthday gift." I said, "My blessings." He said, "No, no. I want you to bless that I may live some more years." And he was a man who was living alone, his wife had died, I mean a couple of decades earlier. He had no children with him. Alone in a single flat and he was happy to live more, not knowing that from the day we are born, we are dying in one sense. Yet, that dying is necessary to go on living, because as each day goes, another shell falls off, another covering *must* fall off if you live properly, until you come out resplendent like a chicken out of the egg.

I am sure every chick inside the egg feels protected: Let me remain in this — protected, no danger from outside; but unless it breaks out of that shell, it is not going to express *its* life. And when we look for protection, when we look for a protection in any form, say whether it is in wealth or houses or just in being a beggar with nothing to own so that I can lose nothing (that is also a sort of protection), we are denying the justice of life, the goodness of life, the wonder of life.

Don't ask, just be. Thank you.

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Sarnadji's words are always full of wisdom. I have said on several past occasions that I have benefited a lot by association with him, have learnt a lot, and I hope I will continue to receive wisdom from him and, as my elder brother, his blessings also for myself, for all of you, for the Mission. Because such preceptors — you know, preceptor does not mean some official post in the Mission. A preceptor is one who teaches — precept comes from a Latin root [*cept*]: *concept*, *accept*... everything. So we should encourage our elders to speak more to us, and that encouragement can only come when we sort of create an atmosphere where they will feel that they have to speak.

You know, as Babuji Maharaj said time and again, “I compelled my Master.” This compulsion is not by holding Lalaji's beard and taking it and saying, “Are you going to give me or not?” Not like that — in an aggressive, offensive manner, but by the compulsion of love, submission, surrender. Now those of you who have ever had a dog at home will know how that

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dog can compel you by just sitting in front of you and looking soulfully with its big eyes, slight wagging of its tail. You may be the toughest hearted person, but you will get up and throw a ball at least.

So the value of things like submission and surrender, and this longing which comes from the heart — *craving*, as Babuji used to say — that power, nothing else in this universe can match. You know how a child entices us, “Daddy, Daddy!” And if the child is aggressive and says, “I want,” you know [he] gets a few kicks, *thappad* [slaps] as we say. Babuji used to like saying, “*Usko do thappad lagao* [give him two slaps].” But if it is there patiently, and comes and hugs you and looks at you longingly, no parent can withstand it. And no guru can withstand that sort of craving and submission from a disciple. And you know, what we have heard now is, from the side of the abhyasi, what we have to develop in ourselves.

But I can tell you the anguish that Babuji used to suffer; it was not just, “my pain.” He says in his article My Pain, but it was anguish. No physical anguish can match it. I have known [him] almost in tears when he spoke of some abhyasis and, according to him, they were not progressing, they were even regressing; and he said, “How much time I had given to them, how much effort I have given to them, and look at the result.” Because when we talk of sadhana, we are only thinking of the years of meditation that *we* have done. As Sarnadji said, with what degree of commitment, with what degree of dedication do we do it? Just, you know *naam ke vaaste* in Hindi or lip service. Have you meditated? — that’s all! But from his side, every second of effort is the total effort of his being. And that only love gives, you see — his love for the abhyasis.

Rightly, Sarnadji has said, “Many are called, few are chosen.” That is a biblical statement. But after thinking for the last thirty years, I have come to the conclusion that He does the calling, we do the choosing. We make sure that we don’t choose ourselves the right way for the path: we play the fool; we tinker with this wonderful system that we have, effective system that we have. And, as Sarnadji hinted, this is the only system that can take us where we have to go — doubtless. And if you say, “Why not — can there not be a second system?” it is as unchaste as a husband saying, “Why cannot there be a second wife who is as good as my wife?”

You see, Lord Rama was known as the great Chakravarti [emperor], *kshatriya* [warrior] who introduced the idea of *eka patni* [having one wife]. Before that, Kshatriyas were allowed any number of wives. His father had so many. Chakravarthi Dasharath had three wives you know. The law permitted it, society accepted it, kingship demanded it perhaps. But Lord Ram said, “No. Like *ekam sat* [the Truth is One], one *patni* [wife], no more.” And *patni* does not mean that after marriage you can look here and there. Like Sarnadji said, “Blinkers! I have found; I have chosen; I have married — finished.” Marriage is for life. In the Ramayana, if you read, or even see the Ramayana [TV serial], according to Valmiki — the *krauncha pakshi* [*krauncha* bird] — one mate dies, the other also dies. In fact, Ramayana of Valmiki starts with that famous *sloka* [verse] of *krauncha pakshi*. We praise birds, we praise animals for being wedded once and never a second time. One dies, the other dies. We don’t mean physical death — the heart dies with that. When we say we have given the heart, [when] the person who has taken the

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heart, that person departs, the heart is gone. So how can he give it again? That is the idea of *eka patni*.

Or even with a guru, you know — “I have given my heart to my Master,” and then you say, “No, no, sir, I have joined Sant Mat or Sai Baba. I went to see — I just went to see casually, you see. I have never seen Sai Baba. And you know, he says exactly what Sahaj Marg says.” Here is the danger. Everybody says exactly what Sahaj Marg says. Every woman to a man, offers exactly what my wife also offers — and per contra. Every hotel offers wonderful food. Today the habit of eating out, spending hundreds and hundreds of rupees, often thousands of rupees, ignoring the good food lovingly prepared at home, you see, this is taking root in our minds.

We are not happy with our family lives because we are always looking outside to what my neighbour is enjoying: how much more beautiful his wife is, how much more educated his children are, how much better his job is. We have stopped looking into ourselves. And the moment you start looking outside, keeping your vision inside upon yourself in your heart, we are lost. Then begins all this flippant, dangerous and often devastating comparison with others. “No, no sir, Sai Baba blessed him so much. Sai Baba told him, ‘You are liberated.’ My Master never said, ‘You are liberated.’” Because liberation is not something to be spoken about in our Hindu culture, in our Sanatana Dharma. In the ancient values of life according to our society, love is not to be spoken about. The more we see in pictures, “I love you,” you know, and our children emulate it, our students emulate it, society is going [down] — *patan*.

Babuji Maharaj — you know, I remember when we

were sitting in an airport, he looked at a bar — all shining, chromium and glass, and he said, “What is all that?” So somebody said, “It’s all liquor in bottles.” He said, “We must be like that. You know they are full of liquor but none of them [are] drunk!” You know the value of that simile, that he told that day? The whole world we must be able to take it into ourselves but we must not allow that world to corrupt us. We are people of this world, we are born into this world, we have a responsibility to ourselves in the world, and unto the others in this world with us. The idea of spiritual service is one of not just getting from the Master and then keeping it for ourselves, but of disseminating it. Like a lamp which must give light. A lamp which doesn’t give light is no lamp. It can be made of gold, it can be made of diamonds. It is like the tree of Mohammed Ghazni, you see — all diamonds but no fruit. And that obedience of Ayaz that Sarnadji just spoke [of], we have a parallel in our own literature. I think it was Parashuram who was asked to kill his mother (I am not sure). And when his father said, “I am pleased; ask for a boon.” He said, “I want my mother back.” And he got her back. This is a great moral behind this idea of sacrifice — what you sacrifice, you get.

Only yesterday I was talking about a time when I had to fast for five days in Denmark. Very gently, very kindly, Babuji said, “*Mei chaakta boon*, — I wish that tomorrow you don’t eat. Is there any objection?” You know, he was so gentle always, he was always thinking of you even when he is going to give you the wealth of the universe, let us say. I mean, for a fellow like me, I could have fasted for fifty days and not felt it. But his gentleness, his softness, his kindness, his love — I said,

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“Of course, Babuji.” He said, “This is what I expected from you, this answer.” And it went on for five days. Different phrases but the same love, which only shows you may give water in a silver vessel, gold vessel or a mud pot, but the water must be pure. What you give must be purity. The container has no value. It is the content that is valued. And there was the question of obedience. Suppose I had said, “No, no, Babuji, for me fasting is very difficult in Denmark — a place full of ice creams, lovely cakes and fruits,” he would have said, “All right, you eat it.” And what I would have lost, only I know.

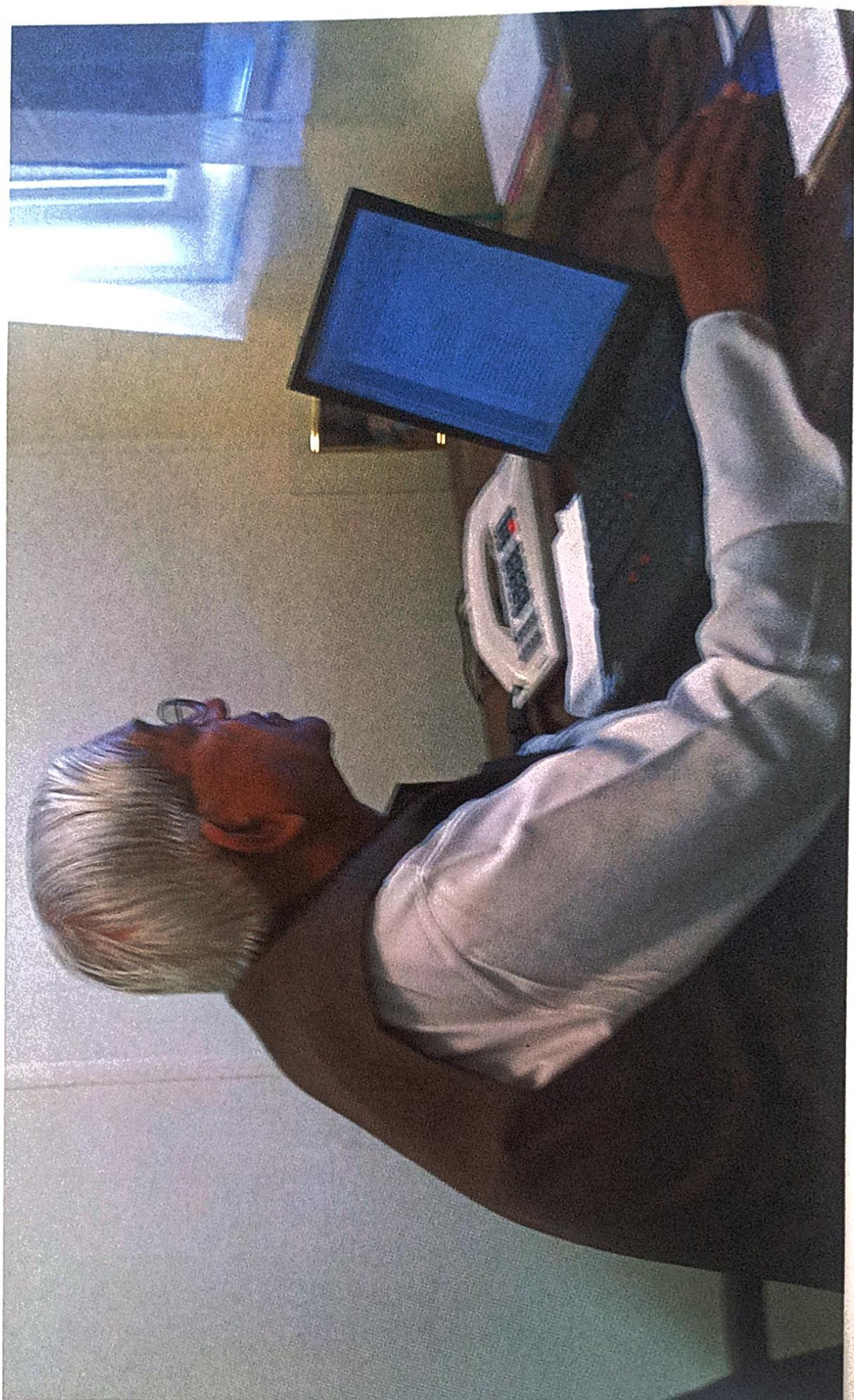
So in this world, the worldly sacrifices we are called upon to make are like mud. And what we are about to get from Him in response to our obedience is *amrit* [nectar]. No less. Nothing less. But we are so used to disobedience, like children, you know; the moment you say, “Don’t look at this tumbler,” it will only look at it. “Don’t look at that uncle’s nose,” it will only look at that nose. “Daddy, daddy, why did you say, ‘Don’t look at his nose?’ Is it because it is so long?” And you are embarrassed. And you wonder why you told your child not to look at his nose; whereas if you tell him ‘look at his nose’, it will not look! We carry this disobedience and even, let us say, this obstinacy about obedience, and even a perversion of doing something that we should not do, and not doing what we should do, into our spiritual life as adults, and we question.

Yesterday one girl asked me, “Why should we not think of something you know — *naasikaagre* [the tip of the nose, referring to the point to focus on for meditation] or whatever it is.” I said, “Ask questions about why we *should* do something? It is sensible.” “Why

am I asked to meditate before dawn, before sunrise?" It's a legitimate question. "Why not other times? Why should I not?" This shows a perversion of the human mind that we are always seeking excuses for not doing what we have to do, we are always seeking justification for what we should not have done, blaming, as rightly Sarnadji has pointed out — "No, no, sir, my son, wonderful boy, he was spoiled by his friends in class. What can I do, sir? Today classes are like that. He was introduced to smoking by his friend." And every year we hear of students who have drowned in this [water] fall or that fall you know, because half-a-dozen students go and they are bragging, "I can. You can swim," and the fellow who cannot swim jumps into the water and drowns, because he has to keep up appearances. He cannot look weak and small before his friends. Here comes the need for humility. You have to say, "Yes, I am a weakling, I don't know how to swim." They will laugh at you. Enough. But here you lost your life!

So you see, life where you have somebody to accept as a guide — it is a great good fortune, you know to find somebody whom you can look to for guidance in every situation of life, not only spirituality. I remember once Babuji took me to a *hakeem* [Muslim physician]; I was suffering from migraine. There was a hakeem in Shahjahanpur. He said, "He is the best." So we both went in the rickshaw, and we went to the hakeem. And the hakeem said, "*Vaah!* You know, *meri davaa aur aap ki dua se behtar kya ho saktha hai?* [Wow! What could be better than my medicine and your prayers?]" Of course neither worked! [Laughs] Because the samskaras were there perhaps, you know, it was necessary for me to suffer that pain.





Be Prepared

We must always understand the greatness of the symbolism of Kabir, you know, of the potter — these big mud pots in which you store grain, where the clay is moulded, in which he puts one hand inside, [with] the other hand he hammers with a wooden mallet. Babuji used to speak of this. He said, “Look at the greatness of that man, you see. He is moulding the clay, but knows it can bear only so much pressure. So with one hand inside, and the other hand outside, he makes sure that the clay can only bear what it can bear and no more. Because if you knock it, his purpose is not fulfilled, because he will destroy the clay pot which he is trying to make.” The Master is no less considerate. The Master is no less a craftsman. Do you mean to say that Master is less than the man who is moulding a mere clay pot? He is moulding us human beings, living human beings. Do you mean to say that the Master will ever subject you to pain that you cannot bear? We question his love; we question his consideration for us. We say, “Oh — *ayyo!* I cannot bear this. What sort of a Master have I?”

So you see, we must have this *absolute faith* that only what I can bear He makes me bear, because it is good for me to bear. In one stroke, my *samskaras* are removed. There is a story I was telling some *abhyasis* yesterday of Milarepa's Master, Marpa. When he [Milarepa] went in search of him, it took him years to find him, and ultimately, he had to go to the upper reaches of Tibet. He found Marpa standing in the icy water of a lake with leeches all over him. And Marpa didn't even look at this youngster who was waiting for him on the bank of that lake. Six months he sat there. Then Marpa came out. Then he said, “Who are you?” He said, “I have come in search of the great Marpa.” He said, “What

do you want from him?" He didn't say, "I am Marpa," he said, "What do you want from him?" Then this boy slowly asked, "Why are these leeches — what are you doing it for?" He said, "There is so much samskara in me that in one life it is impossible to get rid of it. So I am subjecting myself to this torture you see, so that they go quickly." But ours is not a way where we subject ourselves to torture. We have to bear something which is good for us, so that our samskaras go.

Babuji Maharaj praised pain, he praised suffering. He said, "The more pain you bear, the more it is for your benefit," but we are not able to accept even a small headache. One day fasting, a little less salt in the food, sweets that are not so sweet — "*Emandi!* You know, we have to go that shop, you know Dhananjay's famous shop, and buy [at] two hundred and twenty rupees a kilo and then eat it." So you see, this unswerving faith in the Master, like a dog. Babuji used to praise the dog because it questioned nothing. You give it bread, it eats bread; you give a biscuit, it eats biscuit; don't feed it, it lies down patiently. You go out, it goes out with you. You jump into the river, it jumps into the river with you. You walk on the mountains, it walks on the mountains. It will not stay at home leaving the Master alone. Cats will stay at home. When the Master leaves the sofa, it will jump onto the sofa and sleep blissfully. So Babuji used to praise the dog. He said, "*Kutta jaisa hona chaahiye.* [You should be like a dog.]" And then he said, when you reverse D-O-G, it becomes G-O-D. You all know these things. Unfortunately, we don't read our literature.

I remember once, the *Patrika* had been published, Babuji was sitting in his chair, and some abhyasis had come and Babuji was saying something, and one man

praised it; he said why is it not published? He [Babuji] said, "It has appeared in this month's *Patrika*. You don't read it." We don't want to read. We keep books, we don't read them. We have a sadhana, we don't practice. We have to do the cleaning, we prefer to go to the cinema. Ten Maxims are for others. So this life of spiritual sadhana, of being a spiritual *sadhak* [practicant] is very easy if you are obedient. You have nothing to do except to obey. He says sit, you sit; close your eyes, you close your eyes; meditate, you meditate. Finished.

Babuji said, in an ideal situation, the first sitting should be the last sitting — ideal situation. Of course, it doesn't exist. Therefore he was anguished, you see, and he said, "How many years have I to wait?" You remember the anguish of Ramakrishna Paramahansa when he saw Narendrakrishna coming to him? He said, "How long I have waited for you!" And this educated graduate, he was a little *jugupsu* [disgusted]. He didn't want to be hugged (it is written in the books), and he felt that Ramakrishna was mushy, you know, was sentimental. "What is this foolish sentimentality of the so-called saint? He is weeping, 'Where are you, I have been waiting for you?'"

So the Master waits for us. And we have the temerity, we have the cheek, we have the arrogance to think we are waiting for the Master. "Sir, I have been waiting for you for three months, you have not come." And he smiles. So to understand what the master feels, what he is looking for, how much he longs that every one of us should become like Him, you have to become like a mother. Fathers don't have this anguish for their children. Mothers have. That is why Babuji said, "Think of your Guru as your mother." How to be able to create

an ideal relationship between yourself and your Guru is to think of him as your mother. Loving, forgiving, ever-giving — not just forgiving, ever-giving. She withholds nothing. She gives at the cost of her own existence. But today in our society, we have lost respect for our mothers, for fathers, for teachers; in fact, we have lost self-respect. Because a society which does not respect its elders, its preceptors in the shape of gurus, teachers, has lost respect for the self. And this is what we see manifested in our society where there is arrogance, there is pride, self-seeking; where there is *tiraskaar* [disrespect] of every value that we have nourished and cherished over centuries of history, and that is what we have to weep about if we have to weep. What has our society come to? What have we come to? But there is some hope as Babuji said, “As long as Sahaj Marg is alive, there is hope at least a few souls will spring off and keep this lamp lit, so that the seeker shall always find the way.”

So each one of you has a duty, my dear sisters and brothers. Sahaj Marg is not only for you. It is not for us here to seek liberation; we must have the boldness, we must have the love, we must have the compassion of the Buddha to say, “Until the last human being is liberated, I shall be here.” What is liberation worth? What do we know what is a liberated condition? We all think it is a place where we will enjoy, you know, like in one religion, it is a river full of wine with houris on the banks of the river; nothing to do but laze in the sunlight. I don’t think liberated state is going to be like that. If you expect that and you ever get into that condition, you may want to come back. That would not be very good, you see. That would be even a greater

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anguish to the Master who liberates and says, “For this I brought him here [that] he wants to go back?” Can you imagine if that would be, you would be shattered.

So please remember that we are here for purposes greater than our own personal purpose of liberation or some fantastic world where we are going to relax and enjoy freedom. I am very sure it is not going to be like that. I am very sure that anyone who goes into the Brighter World will have something even more to do: some more responsibilities to handle, maybe some other worlds where we have to go and work. I am personally prepared — if I ever go there by His Grace — because there is no other way. It is foolish to think that we have meditated and cleaned and followed the Ten Maxims sufficiently to earn our way and our place in the Brighter World. It is not so. *Yam esha vai vrinute tena labhyah*, you know — only whom He wishes to give [to] will get. If in His Benevolence, in His Love for us, He takes me there, I am prepared to hear from Him, “Parthasarathi, your next assignment is there.”

So I don't want people to think of the liberated state or liberation as something to be liberated from everything. It is going to liberate us from the present situation, into a future situation from where we may have yet further things to look forward to, to anticipate, to work for. Because remember the title of his book, *Towards Infinity – Anant Ki Or*. And that is a never-ending path. Our sadhana will never end; our obedience can never end. Our purpose is ever in front of us. So the only advice I can give is: Be prepared. Thank you.

Universal Plan

We are once again gathered here to solemnly celebrate the birth anniversary of our great Master, Revered Babuji Maharaj. This gathering has taken place ever so often, amid the ever-changing scenery that is this world of ours. Today, we are seeing all around us the enormous violence that the powerful in this world are wreaking upon the weak and downtrodden – creating havoc and misery in the lives of innocent people, destroying lives and property in the name of peace!

If we could put it in the words of my great and benevolent Master, man's vision of his existence in this world is not correct. He thinks in terms of eternity when he is merely a passerby. Human beings generally set out to accumulate more and more tangible properties, but remain generally unconcerned with building up their spiritual assets. With the passage of time, they get wisdom and begin to realise that there is a lot to do to fill in these kinds of gaps. When a soul wakes up, it searches for its way and ends up finding the Master who is intended for him.

Message on Babuji Maharaj's 104th Birth Anniversary Celebrations, 1st May 2003, Hyderabad, India

Universal Plan

Our abhyasis are undergoing this process; they searched, made experiments in other ways, and what they acquired enable them to appreciate the simplicity of our method. They must sense the call from inside for true reasons, and not for the sake of appearances or for satisfying their curiosity. Rituals, songs and all sorts of initiatives striking the imagination do not belong to our program.

Our sincere abhyasis are satisfied with what my great Master has offered to them: a spiritual work suitable for their aspirations. It is accessible to all those who are ready. Fear brings man back to the important and main things of life. This kind of madness, which is setting in on the earth, will do nothing but intensify misery and puzzle human beings. What will be their recourse when the values to which they have been attached will no longer be current? Will they at least then, perhaps, try to understand the true meaning of life and associate it with a nobler cause than the one they have been giving importance to?

The infinitely great and the infinitely small merge; they vibrate with the same divine energy that animates the entire creation. Everything that exists on this earth is alike, since they all emanate from the same source. Species differ from one another by specific characteristics, but they are unified in that they have this common source. In that respect, each of them deserves to be observed and loved. Creation is not completely seen from this perspective, yet this aspect is important. Man is part of this great whole created by a single and divine will. At the present level of human intelligence this universal plan can hardly be understood. The day when such knowledge will be spread in a more advanced

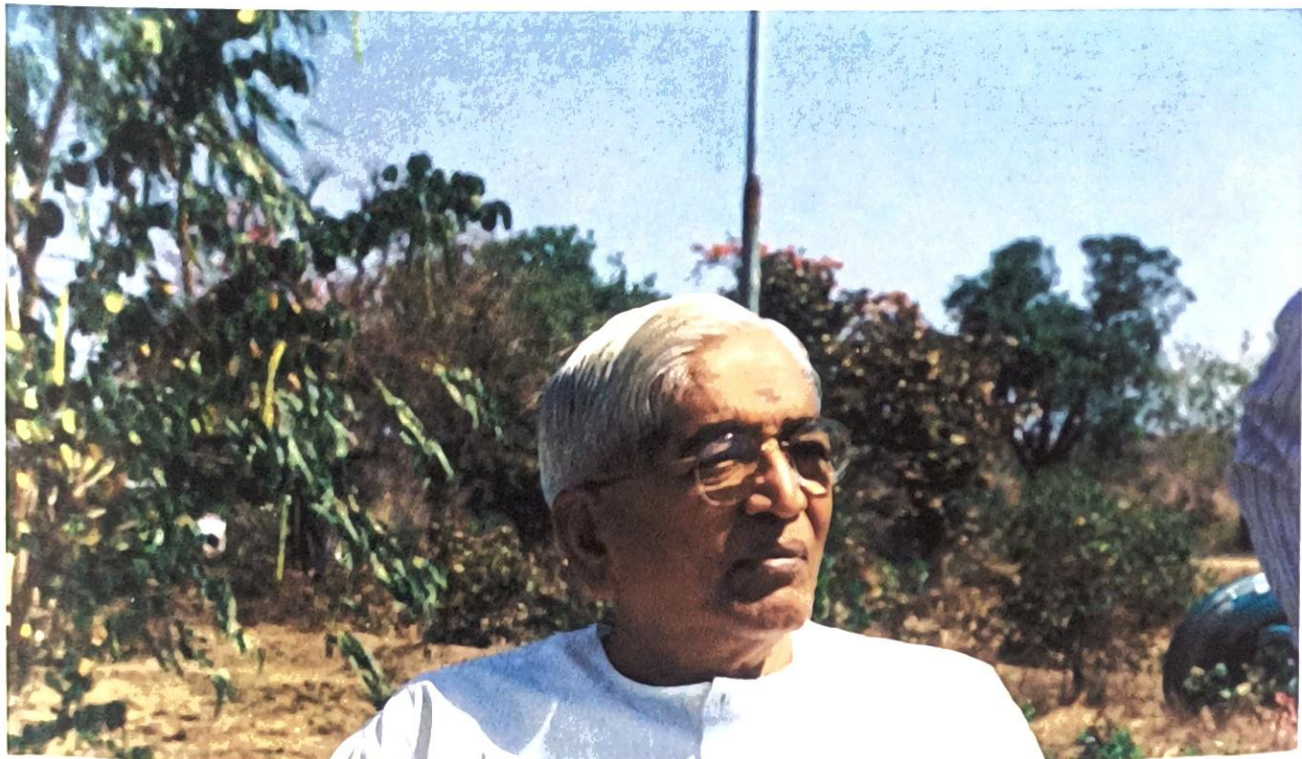
world, with human beings more capable of grasping the great mysteries of creation, will surely dawn. Human beings will then be amazed by discoveries that are now completely hidden from their understanding.

Since the beginning of time, man has been moving from discovery to discovery and he believes, at each point in time, that he possesses the entire truth. A time will come when the truth will appear to him for good, and from that day on he will no longer resemble his ancestor, i.e., as he is today, with fixed convictions. We should all pray that this may happen soon on this earth by His grace, so that a higher level of evolved beings will populate it.

When will man understand that only love can save the world? This word is so often overused, abused, distorted, or half-heartedly used, even in a spiritual way like ours. Only a completely open and receptive heart can feel its benefits. A true spiritual process intensely put into practice necessarily leads to it. It is the only food that the soul enjoys. It must be sought and maintained carefully. It is the supreme refuge. God being love, it is inseparable from faith, and without it, faith cannot really blossom. We can never extol it enough. In these troubled times for the world, one can only note how desperately it is lacking in men. It is ignored, mistaken about, misunderstood, the hearts not being ready and willing to receive it.

The great revelation will be when hearts are conquered by its unique power, since it is the highest expression of the divine.

P. Rajagopalachari.





Set Your Direction

The celebration now comes to an end. I have been asked to speak. I am reminded of some words of Babuji Maharaj, “Why do we celebrate the birthday of great saints? In our case, our Master – Masters. He said we should use this occasion to remember them. Remember what? Remember their teachings, remember their lives, remember how they lived, remember their love that they gave us, and utilise all these to our own advantage in our sadhana. Do we remember? That is the first thing. For what purpose is this *tyohaar*, this celebration? Good arrangement, good stay, good climate; and not the least, good food. I am told that the *dosa* in the canteen is superlatively good and there are always long queues for that. Of course, there is no harm in enjoying the climate that the Master provides. Today it is exceptionally cool.

But when we talk of remembering the Master, what should we remember? For me, it is an occasion to express our gratitude to the parents of the Master. They who

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gave him birth, and gave him an opportunity to live life on this earth, because without them, there would have been no Master. Therefore, I think the Veda says, "*Matru devo bhava, pitru devo bhava.*" [Mother is like God, father is like God.] We have to be grateful to his Master, Lalaji Maharaj, who made him, who made Babuji Maharaj the greatest Master ever. Babuji Maharaj has said time and again that without Lalaji Maharaj, I'd be nothing. He'd often say "I am still *nothing*," but that is in a spiritual sense. The *nothingness* of spirituality is not the nothing that we are. When a human being says, "I'm nothing, sahib," he does not mean he is a saint. But when a saint says, "I'm nothing, I came from nothing, I have gone to nothing," that nothing is a different nothing. And that nothingness, only the greatest of Masters can give. So the parents, the guru, therefore "*Acharya devo bhava.*" [Guru is like God.]

And then, what is this last thing about "*Atithi devo bhava?*" [Guest is like God.] It has many meanings, but to me, it means our abhyasis, who are our guests. Babuji Maharaj used to say, he celebrated Lalaji Maharaj's birthday, birth anniversaries or Basant Panchami, and he invited the others to help him in celebration, in participation in the celebration, in enjoying the bliss that he pointed out pervades for three days of the Basant Panchami celebrations. We have all experienced it. So he was the Master, the provider, he was the *atithi* [guest], and when you say *Atithi devo bhava*, "May you all become great." May you all become what he wants you to become. This part we forget. We are all *atithis* [guests] of course, but we enjoy rather than become.

Human life today is only a pursuit of enjoyment, pleasure, happiness. This material life is nothing but a

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means to enjoyment, to more and more pleasure, and to some ephemeral thing we call happiness. I remember what Babuji Maharaj said about pleasure. He said the only real pleasure is when pain is removed. There is no positive thing like pleasure. There is a natural state of being which is neither pleasurable, nor painful. *"I am, It is, Tat tvam asi, That thou art"*, things like that. So when you swing to this way or this side of the balance, there is pain or pleasure, darkness or light, life or death (I mean in temporal terms) but if there is balance, there is neither.

Of course, somebody may ask you, "What about Babuji's pain?" He has written about it. *"My pain."* I think his pain came from two sources. One was his separation from his beloved, his Master, because on the occasion of celebrating Lalaji's Birth centenary in Madras in 1973, when Babuji was reading his message, there was a moment when there was a reference to Lalaji Maharaj, and Babuji's voice broke, there were tears in his eyes and he had to stop. And then he wiped his glasses and started reading again. I asked the Master himself, "What happened to you?" He said, "you know, the pain of physical separation is there, must be there, because human beings are not supposed to become cold and stone-hearted, like supposedly some great saints have been. We are supposed to be very much human; become more and more human as we become divinised.

And as Babuji said, the higher you rise, the lower you must look." The lower you look does not mean that those who are below us are low. It means that you look at human beings, you look at the animal level of life, you look at the vegetable level of life, you go beyond

into the different stages of life, and you go even further beyond and wonder how all this is going to be liberated, divinised, stage by stage. Because his work as far as I could see and as far as he was happy to teach us or give us information occasionally, was that until you go down to the lowest, you are not into the highest.

I remember once he told me when I complained about something, some pain, some headache, I don't know what, some person who was not developing, or who was mulish, obstinate and refusing to see the path, he said, "If you are going to do my work; you must be prepared to go down to the lowest hell and bring people up from there." We are not to just go around big cities, and look at posh hotels and palaces, and be with the sophisticated human beings – that is not spiritual life. Of course, they are also there. We may have in our Mission, the greatest of the great rulers, princely rulers, rulers of government, rulers of court, you know, very high dignitaries from all walks of life, but they are a few. It is with the large mass of humanity that we are concerned – the poor, the weak, the humble, what Christ said – "They are the salt of the earth." What is the salt of the earth? Sugar is very little, but salt is everywhere. If you look at the oceans of this world, it is all salt. Sugar has to be manufactured.

So our work is to go down and down you know, pray for everything that you come across, work for everything that you have an opportunity to work upon or work with, and not insist that people who come to you should already be saints in the making. "No, no sir, I can work with these few people because they are already you know, showing signs of elevation. But these people? They are your work." That is where our

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work *should* be. Otherwise you are like doctors who want healthy people coming to their clinic. Imagine a cardiologist who never had a heart attack case in his hospital or who is afraid to do a by-pass. Or who doesn't want somebody fainting in his clinic and says, "Take him away, take him away." With today's doctors there are many who refuse. I cannot imagine a doctor refusing a case because it is a terminal case and the doctor would spoil his record. They think more of their records than of the patient's record. Why did he refuse? "No, no sir, he will only take successful cases." Of course, this disease has spread to schools; they only take the best students and then pretend that they have made them. Isn't it?

So in spirituality, on one side Babuji said, "Look for good material." He said avoid, so many things he has said, but what was in his heart, because he never avoided anybody or anything – anybody who came, he accepted. So should we look for what he occasionally said, when some mad fellow came and he said, you know, "What should we do?" He said, "*Usko jaldi le jao. Mission ki badnami hogi.*" [Take him away quickly otherwise the name of the Mission will be spoiled]. That is one aspect. The other aspect is there are many people here who are not mad enough to be certified and sent away to institutions. I'm sure if you look at the fifteen thousand here, it should not be difficult to find a substantial percentage who would come under that qualification. We accept them too. Why? Because it is our work to make of something, which is not yet that which it has to become.

A potter does not make ready-made pots and says I'm a potter. He is only a seller of pots. If you start

working with clay, kneading it and moulding it, putting it under the potter's wheel, and if in that process you become a great saint, like Gora Kumbha of Karnataka tradition, then you are also a potter and also a saint. More a saint progressively than a potter. If you are a Kabir who started life as a weaver but became a saint – the greatest ever, as Babuji said. So every saint has to be something else. There have been teachers, there have been weavers, there have been potters, there have been leather-workers, name it, they are there which only means saints can come from any walk of life. We don't look to IAS people and MBAs, superlatively paid public service people, for our abhyasis. They come because they need to come.

So we work here on the basis of need – who needs our help must have our assistance; who needs our teaching will come to us. Are we in a position to give them what they need? I keep emphasizing this word *need* because Babuji emphasized it always. He said “Need, not wants.” I need food but I want *dosa*, *masala dosa*. You are entitled to food but you are not entitled to say give me *aloo paratha* or *methi roti* or something like that. This I have, this you shall have. This is the law. So ‘*atithi devo bhava*’ means, I can give you what I have, if you have come to me. So Babuji said, “That we have is what my Master has given.” This we can under no circumstance withhold or refuse.

That Babuji Maharaj said, “Be selective in your approach” yes of course. He cannot make one poor prefect go and stand on a bridge, and invite all the lepers in their country to come to him, and make them sit in a row and say, “I'll transform you in one sitting into healthy people.” That is stupid, it is ridiculous, and not

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permitted. Or like another one of our abhyasis who was also a prefect, who started transmitting to earthworms and the cockroaches. That too is not permitted. But, as Babuji Maharaj said, referring to Dr. Varadachari, "When you are elevated, by radiation emanating from you, even the mosquitoes and the ants in your life will proceed towards liberation. He did not say, 'you liberate the ants and the mosquitoes in your life'. I don't think any prefect was given that work. But he said, "Become that, through which your own radiation will influence everything in your vicinity, in your environment, plants, insects, animals." Are we becoming like that or are we trying foolish experiments, pulling us too high in a cage, and sitting in a corner, and transmitting and saying, "That's all," – who all doesn't know what 'that's all' means, isn't it?

So the proper understanding of Sahaj Marg is essential. And how to live life, we are always hankering after a comfortable life, a pain-free life. You have read about Lalaji Maharaj. Unfortunately, I've not seen Lalaji Maharaj during his life. One of my great regrets was, I was born in 1927, and he was there till 1931. I could have been exposed in some way to him, to his great physical presence. But when I told this to Babuji, he said, why do you regret? Am I not giving you what he gave me? True. There are grand-children who have never seen their grand-parents. But are they not getting what their grandparents had? Genetically, certainly, as medicine justifies. In other ways, inheritance is their heritage, their social culture, their religion perhaps.

So we are inheriting things from people whom we have never seen, we have never lived with. And provided the next medium of inheritance is properly

trained, properly cultivated – that is, if a son has a father who is able to transmit what he got from his father, correctly, without difficulty, if possible, even they made better and better – that son loses nothing by not having seen his grandparents. So Babuji said, “Why do you regret?” Of course, you’d have been very happy to see Lalaji Maharaj. And he added with a twinkle in his eye, “Lalaji would have been very pleased to see you too, I’m sure.” But then nothing lost because our life is determined by the circumstances of our birth, but that limitation is only in the temporal way, in the material way. I cannot change the colour of my skin. I cannot unbecome what I have been in my religion. But I can go beyond my religion, I can overcome the frailties, the weaknesses that my inheritance has given me, even genetic weaknesses can be overcome by proper living, by proper training.

There have been great stories in our tradition about people like Ashtavakra for instance, who, notwithstanding their great physical deformity, which could have been considered as his great weaknesses, perhaps somebody could have even said, they must have been great sinners, they became greatest saints. Agastya was a rishi of the Saptarishis. Babuji said, “He was a lame man. He was probably suffering from polio in his childhood,” Babuji said laughingly. I suppose he had been limping. So we can overcome physical deformities, we can overcome mental weaknesses, deformities, lacks. Spiritually of course, the potential for growth is unlimited.

So we find our Master you know, apparently without much education, apparently physically weak, but those who had the eyes to see, as Babuji always kept saying,

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“He who has eyes to see, will see what is behind the superficial veil of material life,” and that vision we have to develop. *Darshan* means that. *Darshan* does not mean what everybody is running around for here you know – looking. *Darshan* does not mean looking. *Darshan* means seeing inside, into the quality of the being who is there. Are we able to develop that vision through our sadhana? We should be able to develop. Are we trying? Unfortunately, I think most of us are not trying to do that.

We are happy with what we see with these eyes. We are happy to smell with this nose and go towards the canteen, for that wonderful dosa. So we are still depending on our senses in the evaluation of our spiritual life, and therefore our successes are few, if at all there, our progress is even less than what it should be, and the Master is left with what he calls, ‘*my pain*’ which is the other pain. I told you there are two aspects to pain – one is that of the separation from his beloved – however close he claimed Lalaji Maharaj was to himself, he said, “He is always with me, nevertheless, there are moments when I feel the pang of physical separation.” He told me one *doha*, couplet, whatever you call it, I do not remember the words, it says, “Even though you are in my heart, my beloved, even that separation is too far for me to bear, and I suffer from it,” – even in that little heart, that little separation between you and my heart, though you are in it, yet that separation hurts. So that was his great pain, that is, we can say it was a wanton pain because of us, his wonderful abhyasis. In spite of his best will, in spite of all his blessings, in spite of his desire that we should all become like him, like that, but proving you know, mulish, obstinate, bent on going our

own way and yet wanting to develop, I mean spiritually.

So the lesson of spirituality was condensed by him – that when you become an abhyasi, set your direction first. Which direction do you want to go? If you want to be better and better and higher and higher in your career, it would be perhaps at odds to your spiritual aspiration. The faster the car goes in the wrong direction, it goes further and further away from where it should go. “*Nahi, nahi*, [No, no,] my car is very fast,” yet you are going in the wrong direction. It only means we cannot come to the spiritual life with too many desires – I want to be rich, I want to be powerful, I want to be well thought of; my family must be, you know, always happy with me; my relatives should not abandon me; I should not be ostracized socially for forgetting my bearings, because many people come and say, “Sir, I have lost my friends. I have lost my taste which I had formerly for life... for pleasure, even when I go to a hill resort, I don’t feel the beauty of that place. What has Sahaj Marg done to me?” They say that with some disappointment. Maybe a feeling of hurt, not knowing that this is what we have to become.

When Babuji said, even if you cut off your head and throw it at your guru’s feet, is too cheap a price to pay for spirituality. We are still bothered about our relatives, our friends we are losing because you know, if you go away out of the environment of your friends, suppose they are players of cards, and you don’t play cards, one day you’ll have to quit. What would you do there, sitting among them? They’ll welcome you for a few times, then they’ll say, “Why are you coming here? You don’t even play cards anymore.” And then if you feel sad, “I’ve lost their company...” what is there to

lose? If you had been a drunkard and stopped drinking, obviously you are not going to enjoy the pleasure of the company of drunkards anymore. And then if you bewail this fact and say I have lost my old friends, what are you thinking about? Where is your thinking? How are you utilising your capacity to think? Is it right? You have been a *chor* [thief] you have lost your friendship with *chor* and you see Ramu on the street and he just avoids you and says, "*Bhai, tum to sant ban gaye. Namaste.*" [Brother, you have become a saint now. Namaste]."

I remember an amusing incident, I located a classmate. I was travelling to Nagpur and there was a gentleman from Raipur travelling with me. He was a mine man you see, developing mines. I said, "Then you must know some geology." He said, "No, no, I have never studied geology, but I employ geologists." Then, casually, in a few questions I established he must be my classmate. I just asked his full name because I don't know his full name and the class we graduated from. Later on that gentleman telephoned me and the opening words were, "*Arreh yaar, saala, suna hai tum bade sant ban gaye*" [Hey, I hear you have become a great saint now!] – telling in our old school tradition you know, of words when you use a bad word, it is supposed to mean familiarity. "*Are, ulloo ke patthe, ai bewakoof, idhar aao,*" [Hey, son of an owl, you idiot, come here,] things like that. It is familiarity. And then when you meet your old friend and he is a very successful IAS officer and you are still pulling a rickshaw, and you say, "*Are bewakoof, idhar aao yaar, tum kya karta hai.*" [Hey stupid, come here, what are you doing nowadays.] He says, "*Kaun ho tum? Rikshawale, saale, kheenchte ho rikshaw aur hame bulate ho*" [Who the hell are you, pulling the rickshaw and calling

me?] “*Nahin, nahin, tum Ramu ho na hamare class ke*” [No, no! you are Ramu from our class isn’t it?] “*Arreh, Ramu-vamu koi nahin.*” [Hey, no Ramu –Vamu here.] So, that familiarity is gone because you have remained where you are, he has gone somewhere.

So in spirituality we go somewhere and they remain where they are. Though they may be big bosses, prime ministers of governments, even like people, you know, presidents of wonderful countries, which can bomb half the world in one minute – we are no more in that world. At the same time, we have to develop the ability to be in all the world. When you speak with children, you must be as comfortable with children as when you speak to illiterate people, to traders, to businessmen, to government officials. You must be always what you are. And because you are nothing, you are able to be everything at all times.

So you see, this need to become something which is nothing, is of paramount necessity in your work. If a prefect is a chief secretary to a state government, or a governor of a state, and he says, “I’m the governor, come, I want to teach you Sahaj Marg.” He says, “*Huzoor, hum to rikshaw kheenchte hain bhai, hum aap ke saath kaise baithenge?*” [Sir, I am just a rickshaw puller. How can you and I sit together?] I know people who would come to Babuji Maharaj, very highly educated people, very highly elevated people. They were not there for long because they could not stomach Babuji’s surroundings, where he lived, to the superficial uncleanness of the locality. They preferred a five star environment. Had Babuji Maharaj met them in their homes they’d have been very happy, would have washed his feet, done *paada pooja* [worshipping the feet], et cetera. Therefore

Set Your Direction

we say you have to develop the capacity to meet the lion in its den — maybe stinking with all the dead animals it has eaten and the bones that are left, but a lion is always a lion, whether roaming in the jungle, apparently clean, brave, you know, roaring at everything and everybody, or resting in its own den with the bones and the rotten flesh of the remnants that he has left. And what is it that our Master could have in his environment? All the grossness that he removed from the abhyasis.

He once told me that these are like mountains, *khade reh te hain* [standing all the time]. And then he says, "Occasionally, Lalaji blesses by removing all this grossness." He was not afraid of grossness. If you are a lion, you cannot be afraid of a lion. You must be careful of course, but not afraid. So we cannot be afraid of anything in Sahaj Marg. Some people say, "No, no sir, I want to develop, and have liberation. But beyond that? By guru's grace, we'll see." What will you see by guru's grace if you cannot see it now? It is like saying I'm afraid of car travel, you take me from Secundrabad to the outskirts of Secundrabad and drop me. I'll walk to Tumkunta because I don't like car travel. Arre, but you are inside the car. And if you say that, you'll get out quickly.

So set your direction. Without direction, speed is of no use. Right direction, faster you go, the quicker you are at your destination. Wrong direction, the faster you are, you go in the other way. So everybody is talking of Kabir and his famous *doha* [couplet] of "*prem gali ati saankari*" [love lane is very narrow] and all this sort of rubbish. We are very happy to learn by heart and spew it out, that love lane is very narrow that not even two can walk upon it. But we want our friends, we want our relatives, we want our club members. How? How

is it possible? *'Prem gali ati saankari.* No, no sir, that is what Kabir said! How is it possible in modern times? I have to look to so many people for my happiness. I need the support of my executives." The successful man changes his executive, useless fellow depends on his executive. This every successful man knows. Sack my cabinet. Remove the general manager. What about that factory? Close it down. He is not that dumb.

Babuji attracted people. Why did people go to Master? Whether they were rich or poor, whether they were high or low, whether they were Brahmins or low caste, you found everybody there. At that time even one Vice-President of India was his abhyasi. Judges of the high court were his abhyasis. How come? Because there was something that everybody needs. If you are in school, you only need something; if you are in work, you only need something, but in life, you need something that you don't have and that something only he had. That which gives everything, giving nothing. Are we sensible enough to know what we need? Have we the courage to look for it? And have we the determination to follow until we get it? These are the things that make a Sahaj Marg abhyasi progress on the path, these are the things which can make the guru happy with him or her, and remove some of the strain. And of course when somebody becomes like him, he is very pleased and says, "Today I see myself in you. You are like me, like Lalaji Maharaj told Babuji Maharaj, 'I see myself in you and none can say you are any different from me.'" I pray to Babuji Maharaj to give us all the sense to follow the right way, the courage to put off despite everything that may look as if you are losing things, and finally, with his grace, to reach that destination. Thank you.

9

Informal Conversation

PR: Panelists?

PR: Sit down, sit down... who are the other panelists?

Q: Sister Seetha, Rajagopalan, Rajesh Rathod, Somakumar....

PR: Oh....All from Kerala, is it?

Q: There are four from Tamil Nadu, Master.

PR: And you? Panelist?

Q: No Master. Speaker.

PR: What was the purpose for this training?

Q: Preparing faculty members who will be able to talk to abhyasis and aspirants about Sahaj Marg.

15th June 2003, Master's Cottage, Chennai, India

PR: Why not one of you tell me what Sahaj Marg is.

PR: What is the reference to Marlowe?

Q: Marlowe was supposed to have been born and wrote drama before Shakespeare, and he is supposed to be a good writer. But when Shakespeare came, he is supposed to have imitated Marlowe and written things. But he wrote better than Marlowe. Shakespeare is supposed to have imitated Marlowe in many of his writings. Shakespeare started writing when Marlowe stopped writing. Marlowe died in a fight in a bar. He was stabbed by someone and he died. And that was the time when Shakespeare started writing, and he wrote better than Marlowe. So he is called "Great Master's greater disciple" in the literary circles.

Q: So by that token, Master, you are Shakespeare.

PR: I don't write plays, I play plays. Anybody else try to say something, add something?

PR: How much of all this have you felt in yourselves? You are also speaking.

PR: *Illai* [No], for instance, he says Master has come to help us. Come from where? How do we know he has come to help us? Or are we just repeating things we have heard, or hope are correct. You have felt?

Informal Conversation

Q: [inaudible]

PR: Ok, have your tiffin.

Q: You don't have?

PR: No, no, everybody will have.

PR: You have accepted the change, but there are people who change but will not accept it, and they continue to drink...How will you tackle such cases? As he said, having been accustomed to drink...suddenly he feels revulsion, he does not want to drink, or if he drinks the system will not retain it. But some people fight this change, you know, their relatives will say, "*Ayyoda* [Oh], till yesterday, you were enjoying your whisky, what happened to you? You went to Sahaj Marg, ...*illai?*" [isn't it?] and then they go back. So there is one pull from family and friends and society, there is a pull from your inside. How are you going to combat this pull?

PR: Blessing is there, Babuji used to say, blessings are always there. You know, like sunlight is always there. God does not bless and unbless. How do you use the blessings? One man was our abhyasi for many years. And one day during cleaning, I saw a particular deity come out of his heart. He interpreted it that, you know, that he should go back to the deity.

Q: You wrote it in *My Master*.

PR: Eh?

Q: You have written about it in *My Master*.

PR: Now why did he interpret it that way? Because he was guilty about having left temple worship. You know, like many people who have been going to a Guruvayoor, or Tirupati and they stop. Suddenly they get *swapnam* [dream], that Guruvayoorappan comes and says, “*Enthayi*, [what happened,] why are you not coming to me?” you know. Or Venkatachalapathi comes and says, “What is this you are doing? Why are you not coming?” And they go back. Now is this really God, is obvious. If you are guilty you think God has come. “*Ayyoda* [Oh], look at me, you see, I was going twenty-four years to Tirupati, now two years I have been in Sahaj Marg... *Venkatachalapathi swapnathil vannu*,” [Venkatachalapathi came in my dream]...*chodichu* [asked]...and you go back. Another man gets up and says, “Sir, this is *swapnam*.” *Illai?* [Isn’t it?]

So you see, it depends on you how you make use of information, of experience, of indications in dreams, or any other things. Until you are able to cut off attachment to past practices, remove guilt, if any, that I did this and that I am not doing it anymore...Like he is an Iyengar. He used to wear *naamam* [religious symbol worn on the forehead]. Now he has given up. Suppose one day he suddenly sees God in his dream with *naamam* and ...[inaudible]

Q: In fact Master, *Tirupati Devasthanathile irundu*

Informal Conversation

phone vanduthu [I received a call from the Tirupati Devasthanam] for appointing Chartered Accountants they want me to be in the panel...

PR: You go...that doesn't mean you shouldn't go and appoint Chartered Accountants. [Laughter]. That is your job.

Q: It is a commercial thing.

PR: So you see, the cleaning of the self is very important. Otherwise you will misinterpret what happens. The same experience, somebody will interpret this way, somebody will interpret this way. So Sahaj Marg cleaning is most important, because until this thing is cleaned out even appearance of God will be taken as a negative experience, and people go back to religion. You understand?

I tried to explain to that man. You know, suppose you eat mangoes too much, and you vomit, you vomit mango. Can you say, "No, no, no, I want to eat it again." Who will eat his own vomit? "No, no sir, I paid five hundred rupees a kilo for that wonderful mango." Illai? What? [To abhyasi] You are skeptical?

Q: No Master.....surrendered.

PR: So you see, cleaning is very important. Because, sometimes, you know, I am going in the dark, somebody comes, I think it is Venkatachalapathi. He says, "Come, Parthasarathi, let us go back." It can happen to

anyone. And he does not know what is the reality of that experience. For me, the Master's greatest help is in guiding us at the right moment in even interpreting experiences, in interpreting dreams.

I have also written about an experience my wife had. Sister Kasturi gave her a sitting, and my wife saw, you know, the ground cracking around our house. Like in *bhookambam* [earthquake]. And Kasturi said, "You know, this is very bad. Your family is going to have some *aapathu*," [danger] something, some nonsense she said. You know, my wife could not accept it, because she felt good. How can you feel good after bad experience? So when Babuji came, she told him. He said, "What did Kasturi say?" So she told him, "Kasturi said this is very bad, it is not good for your family. It shows some terrible things are going to happen." He said, "This is why I tell abhyasis not to ask preceptors to interpret experiences. Because they use the mind." He said, "On the contrary, this shows that all your association will be removed, all that was holding you back will be destroyed." You know, like suppose you are in a plane and it is tied, and you cut the rope and the plane will fly.

So we should not make the mistake of asking each other, "*Entha Nayare?* [Why Nair], I had this experience. "*Ayyoda* [Oh!]." Finished. So the bigger the doubt, the less you should go to preceptors and friends and relatives. Because, there is also the other danger that somebody who wants you to go back to temple will interpret it according to his like. You know, it is very well known, that some say, for instance, *Sri Bashyam* or *Gita Bashyam*, the three *acharyas* [Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva] have written, and each one has used his own interpretation. Shankara has written *Shankara Bashyam*...

Informal Conversation

Ramanuja Bashyam... You know. And to preach their own philosophy they interpret what the God said.

I had an argument with a very old man in Srirangam. He was a very established temple person and '*mothai theertham*' [the one eligible to receive the holy waters, first] we call it, '*maryadhai*' [honour]. So he was a very respected citizen. I was staying in his house. Three days we had satsangh in the morning and evening. He was resisting. One evening, after food I was talking to him. And because he was *theevra Vaishnava* [staunch Vaishnavite], I started speaking about Gita. He could not contradict anything I said. Because how can you contradict what Lord Krishna says, being a Vaishnava, you know. Finally he said, "But, that is, Lord Krishna spoke that to Kshatriyas only." I said, "Oh, did Krishna tell you that?" See. It is only for Kshatriyas, not for Vaishnavas and, you know, Sudras and Parayahs. Then he discovered his mistake, you see. Next morning he started meditation. What I am saying is, funny arguments people will use.

Q: In fact, when we talk about uniqueness of Sahaj Marg, Master, you know, it more and more inspires me that, see one aspect of the uniqueness of Sahaj Marg is when we talk about pranahuti and cleaning. But when we talk to new abhyasis, they don't know the relevance of, you know, the transmission or cleaning. But if we talk of the online help we get in the system...

PR: Computer language. [Laughter]

Q: Yes...No Master, it is true, you know, anywhere you

want. There is no point in saying you take a mantra, you meditate on the mantra, you go where you go and it is that. But when you talk about an online help that... [Inaudible]

PR: You must depend upon your Self. Isn't it? Self confidence. Confidence in the Self is self confidence. Confidence in the lower self is brashness, you know, "Oh, I can do it." "Can you cross the Pampa?" "Oh, I can do it." And you drown. Illai? "Or can you drink half a bottle whisky?" "Oh, I can do it." And you are in hospital.

Self confidence is that. Confidence in the Self, is the higher Self, where I referred to that, the Parthasarathi inside, as I said in Kollam, or somebody was saying. The whole Gita is nothing but handing over to Lord Krishna. What are you handing over?

Q: Our self.

PR: No no, you are handing over everything. Because according to the Upanishad...which Upanishad?

Q: *Sarvadharmaan parityajya...* [renouncing all dharma].... *Gitayile kadassiyile* [at the end of the Gita]

PR: Forget all that. There is a famous Upanishad where it says, this is like a body, you know, it has the five senses, the horses. The karmendriyas, the jnanendriyas, the path, the charioteer – the *saarathi*, you know, and the Master who is seated inside. The whole meaning of that

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is 'Me' – the five *indriyas*, the five senses, *karmendriyas*, *jnanendriyas*, the *ashva* [horse], you know. So that is the *saarathi*, you see. And the *saarathi* must be one who knows. The Mahabharatha serial, again and again it says, even more important than the *mahaarathi* [warrior] is the *saarathi* [charioteer]. You have heard of the serial, no? That is why Karna says when he wants the *saarathi*, he says, "I must have a *saarathi* like Arjun. He has the Lord himself. I want you", he says. To whom does he say?

Q: Shalya.

PR: Because he says there is nobody other than you who can be equal to Krishna.

Q: He cheated him....

PR: He cheated is...he has not cheated. Shalya tries to reduce his courage and you know.....he made a mistake. What do we say? It is better to be without a Master than to have the wrong Master. Don't we say it? It is better to be without medicine than to have the wrong medicine. It is better to remain unmarried rather than have the wrong wife. *Ellam sollarom illaya?* [Don't we say all this?]

Suppose you are one of these village fellows who thinks every medicine in a pharmacy is good. Otherwise how can it be medicine? *Oushadhamallo?* [Is it not medicine?]. "Sir, give me some medicine." "Which medicine?" "Anything." And like in Kerala, *tharkam* [argument] is very, you know, common in Kerala.

“Oh *manassilayi* sir [I understood sir], they are all good medicine. You don't want to give me.” “*Manassilayo?*” [Understood?] “*Arre, paray* [Hey tell me], what do you want? Which medicine? Doctor *paranjittundallo?* [Doctor has told you?] “Why I should go to doctor, Sir? Five hundred medicines. All must be good, otherwise why do you keep.” Is it logic?

Q: No, Master.

PR: It is logic. It is a fool's logic. [Laughter] Ah.... it is like saying, “Any girl, I will marry. All girls are the same.” [Laughter]. That is one logic. What is the difference between god Muruga, or Ayyappan, or Guruvayoorappan? What difference? How can god be different from god? That is another logic. And when you say formless, nameless, attribute less, how can it be God? Where is this formless? Everywhere there is formless, nameless. You say, that is one definition of God, He is everywhere. “No, no”, he will say, “*Kutarkam* [invalid argument].” You see. So they say, throw not pearls before swine. Illai?

So we have to be careful of what we talk, when we talk, with whom we talk. That means, if you are aspiring to teach Sahaj Marg, you must know to what level you must speak. There is no use preaching the Gita to somebody who is drinking toddy under a palm tree. He will say, “*Saare* [sir]....take a little and then *samsarikken*.” [talk.] [Laughter]. Illai? So it is very necessary to understand. Like power, you know, how much voltage I should apply. Can you fit a 220 watt bulb in a say 440 watt line. Illai? So Babuji said, “Don't use a

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crane to pick up a needle.” In that one single phrase is an entire philosophy of the use of power. What power, when, how, and why. You understand?

So all these things you have to understand intuitively when you see somebody. Otherwise, some of our prefects, you know, they go and catch hold of some people in a toddy shop: “Come, I’ll give you a sitting. *Nokku* [see]. You’ll stop drinking.” “*Entha saare* [why sir], why should I stop drinking? Eh? You are a fool. Join us. You are one, we are many.” Illai? Like *The Jungle Book*. The Bandar log [monkeys]: “We all say so, so it must be true.” Illai? And you say, “*Ayyoda*, it is correct you know, I am alone, I am lonely. With my Gita under my arm and my Master in my heart I am going. Nothing is happening. Let me sit here. They can’t all be fools.” Illai?

Somebody said, Master is lonely, His life is lonely. Why is it lonely? He is not lonely. His companion, you don’t see. And if he laughs and plays with that companion, you will think he is mad. He is here, sitting alone, why is he laughing? With whom is he talking? So he prefers not to show what he is doing. So you say, he is lonely, he is sad, he is, you know, all sorts of funny things. So you have to be yourself while talking to others who want to be themselves, you see. Now how to make them want what, to be that self which you are? What words to use? I am not talking of a Malayalam and Tamil. In any language, what words will you use? The famous example of Ramabhiram when he was not taking his milk and when he wanted the moon, and Kausalya showed him the reflection, and said, “Here it is.” Even with God you have to play tricks. Isn’t it? So, it is not a trick. It is the right technique at the right moment.

One of my friends was a drunkard. And he asked Babuji, "What can your sitting do?" Babuji knew he used to drink. He said, "You know, I will tell you a story." And he told the story of one friend of his own who came to him on one day when they celebrate Holi. They drink, you know. And he came drunk. So, Babuji said, "Why do you do this? You are destroying yourself." He said, "Ram Chandra, can you give me something better than this?" He said, "Sit down" and he transmitted to him, you know. And when he got up, he couldn't walk. He said, [Master speaks in an inebriated tone] "Hey Ram Chandra, what have you done to me?" you know. [Laughter]. Next day he came back again. [Laughter]. He said, "Ram Chandra, give me that which you gave me last evening." You see. [Laughter]. "I have never found anything equivalent. They are all charging money. You are giving free." [Laughter]. Babuji did it again. Then Lalaji said, "Stop this nonsense." You see. "You are doing this, is not going to change. Isn't it. He will come to you once a year because you are making him drunk with your power. But that is not the right use." So we cannot tempt people by showing them miracles.

[Break in tape]

...so it requires a lot of commitment. Like a doctor who will treat a drunkard knowing he is going to drink again. *Manassilayo?* [Understood?]. So we want people of commitment who will go on doing, knowing that in nine hundred cases, in eight hundred and ninety nine you may fail. But it is not your failure. It is his failure. If a drunkard comes again and again to the doctor

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and remains a drunkard, it is not the doctor's failure. It is the drunkard's failure. Isn't it? So don't judge yourself. Judge your work? Leave it to your Master to judge your work. Do your work, to the best that you can, forgetting success. This is pure Karma yoga. *Ma phaleshu kadaachana*, [lay not claim to the fruits of your action] you see. Okay?

Q: [inaudible].

PR: In the Bible there is a parable called "The Parable of the Sower." You know, the seed sower. And the parable says, the sower went forth and sowed the seeds. Some fell on rocky ground. Naturally, they will not germinate. Some fell among thorns and brambles and they were stifled. Some fell among rocks and bushes and were eaten up by the birds of the air. And some fell on fertile soil and yielded forth plenty. Our duty is to sow. But a little better than the sower, we don't deliberately sow on rocks and thorns and brambles. We try to find fertile soil and sow there. So we have to use some discrimination. Some prefects tend to bring everybody, as I said, you know. *Kallukadelendu okkathivechu* [making them sit in the toddy shop] "I will give you sitting, you will stop drinking." Many of them say, "We don't want to stop drinking. Otherwise why are we here?" So, discrimination. We want to help all, but we have to discriminate that to help all is God's work, to help the few is our work. And who are those few? Who come to you. So wait for those who came to you, help them, do the best you can. Don't judge by

HeartSpeak 2003

results. Okay? Thank you.

PR: Yes?

Q: Happy

PR: I am also happy. Rajagopalan and all, they don't let me talk. [Laughter]. Once in a while, I get an opportunity to talk.

All Humanity Unified by Love

Well, let me say how happy I am to be with you all. I'm grateful to all of you for welcoming me. I'm grateful to my sister, Marie-Christine Cottin, for her efforts in getting me a visa, and to a friend of Krishna whom I have not met. Mr. Liogier, I think is his name. He was also instrumental in helping us to get the visa. And of course to my Master for permitting me to come here. You know, I am at a stage in my physical and spiritual life when I like to pretend that everything I say and I do must be with the approval of my Master. So my gratitude to him, and you should also be grateful to him. He used to dream of one humanity. That was his purpose in life, and the direction his work was taking through Sahaj Marg, which I know was only one way of his work. *Il a à sa disponibilité beaucoup de chemins* [He has many paths available to him] *et nous avons connaissance de seulement un chemin* [and we know of only one path]. Yes, I'm sorry [laughs].

But I realize more and more how his universal work was made perceptible and visible to us through the

9th July 2003 at the Théâtre de la Mutualité in Paris, France

Mission and Sahaj Marg. In the spiritual realm, there is work going on to make humanity into one solid, living system. Our work in Sahaj Marg should be to crystallize that effort, and make the physical human life as one system. And, you know, only the hearts can bring that about, not the heads. With the intellect we can only create division, disparity, differences. With the heart we can create unity, fraternity, amity, things like that... amity, friendship. That is why Sahaj Marg concentrates all its work through the heart, on the heart, by the heart.

In my visit to Europe this time, and later on in America, the effort will be to unify Europe in a spiritual way, in a human way, so that we have humanity in Europe, not Europeans. We have human beings, not Frenchmen, not Germans, not Belgians, not Indians – no, not like that. Those of you who are really spiritually inclined, and who believe in what my Master taught regarding, for instance samskara – why we are what we are, why we are where we are, and why we are how we are – it's all an accident. You are French people by accident, I am an Indian by accident, we are Jews and Christians and Muslims and Hindus by accident, the accident having been caused by our own stupidity, through thoughts and actions which were unnecessary. There's no question of vice and virtue, no question of sin in Sahaj Marg. But there is this very vital aspect that when we don't think and act in a way that is spiritually evolutionary, we end up on one of these big catherine wheels going round and round and round. And you know, like children enjoy it – but with a very definite element of fear at one stage – as adults we are also enjoying with fear. The fear is real, the enjoyment is a fallacy. There is no such thing as *joie de vivre*. There is

All Humanity Unified by Love

only existence, consciousness, the possibility of bliss – not happiness. Happiness is not bliss. Bliss is a perfectly balanced state, where there is no happiness and sorrow, there is no good and bad, there is no past, present and future. And that is the only state where we exist without the need for the brain and the intellect.

So you see we have to bring about a common interest in Europe in our assembly here. I don't want to think of this property that the Mission will acquire in the Cardinal Lemoine nearby, as if it is for Paris or the French, or even for Europe. It is for human beings who care to come to it. You know, the great religious centres in this world, whether it is the Vatican or Jerusalem or Mecca – they should not be restricted to people of one religion.

If it is a place of worship, it is a place of God. And human beings cannot divide God into mine and yours. We have schools where people study without difference of caste, colour, creed, or religion. So why can't we worship in places without considerations of religion, and culture and language? Sahaj Marg is aiming at such a future. And you know, the future cannot be created in the future; it must be created in the present. And if you don't have the love for humanity to create such a future for yourself, your children and their children will suffer the consequences of a society divided against itself; human beings hating and killing each other, lies being told by politicians, by religious leaders, by everybody.

Only this morning, you read in the newspaper that President George Bush of America has accepted that Iraq was not buying atomic secrets, or whatever, from Africa. He said his information was wrong. But, you know, one war took place because of that. What was

at that time a definite lie, is today offered as missing, or mistaken information. So lies become mistakes of information, wars become mistakes in judgment, and mass murder becomes what? Something we are sorry for, "We apologize."

So I give you a very definite warning today, and so please don't take it lightly. I have never issued a warning before. I don't believe in warnings and threats and all that sort of thing. But my heart says, "Warn them, that if they continue in this divisive way – health and happiness only for the rich; health and happiness only for the selected few; God only as a personal possession of a few people, of a few communities in this world – God will not tolerate it."

So if you want happiness, harmony, and peace in your lives, it is no use saying, "There's one God." You must feel it, you must practice it, and you must offer it as a reality. Not saying, "Yes, yes, but my God is the real God. There is only one God, but that is my God." That's a lie and a crime against humanity, and against God Himself. In our ashrams, in our meditation halls – whether they are our own or whether they are hired, like this place – I aspire to carry this message of my Master for unification of humanity, by saying that my God is in me, in every one of us. And He has no name, He has no form, He has no attributes, and it would be a definite mistake to say, "But Chari, He has *my* form, *my* name, and *my* attributes." That is an insult to God. But if you are able to say, "I shall assume His name, and His form and His attributes," which are nothing, nothing, nothing, that will be the truth. That is why Sahaj Marg says, towards that *nothingness* we must proceed. Our goal is not to become *nothing*, but to become *nothingness*.

All Humanity Unified by Love

And there are many ways, there are many requirements. We have definitely to shed our culture, our addiction to our language, our attachment to our religion, our suspicion about others. Not for nothing Christ said, "Love thy neighbour as thy self." And my neighbour is not just one who is sitting next to me, but everybody is my neighbour, including trees, animals, birds, insects. If you say, "I love my wife," it may not be a lie. But you cannot love your wife and not love everybody else. This light cannot shine only for you. The sun is universal. Air, light, water, God gave to everybody. Essentials of life are free. Love is an essentiality. We cannot live without love. We cannot have been born without love. And if we die without love, that would be a terrible death, a death in isolation, in misery, in hopelessness.

So we cannot exist in any part of life without love. And to be true, it has to be universal love. We have seen science-fiction stories where individuals have oxygen in their space suits or whatever, you see, but they are in situations of profound danger. So when you seek to individualize only for yourself the good, the essentialities of life, you are in situations of danger. When you universalize it, it is safe. It is safe, because it is there for everybody. If you are in a bubble of oxygen, one prick, and you are dead. But if you are in a world full of oxygen, full of light and full of air and full of water, you are safe because everybody is safe. You can be happy because everybody is happy. If, in your society, you are the only happy person, yours is the only rich house, you will not exist long.

So my plea to you all is to become initially Europeans, because that is also going to be a difficult job for most

of you, not because the job is difficult, but you are the difficulty yourself. But in a selfish world, you have all proved that you can unify yourself when economic considerations become important. The euro has replaced twenty or thirty other currencies in this continent. Why? Why did you agree to it? Because it is profit. Politically, you are integrating yourself. And whether you know it or not, this is not a very happy integration, because it is a coming together of the nations of Europe with an inner fear of a new fear. The fear of communist Russia has gone, but there is very much the fear of a capitalist, democratic nation across the oceans, which is already assuming the status of a world leader. There's nothing wrong with world leadership if it is a loving, benevolent, happy leadership. But if it is a leadership based on the foundations of power, domination, ruthlessness, as it is proving to be, you have only exchanged one devil for a second, potential devil. This fear is surely in the heart of every European, at least the political leaders of the different nations of Europe. So this European unification is fear-based, security-based.

You see it in every airport today, more and more security. For what? "To protect you, the passengers," say the people. "It is for your protection, because you are in an aircraft and we want to protect you and save your life." Therefore all these indignities you have to suffer before you enter the aircraft. And we pretend we are happy. "Take off your shoes," we take off our shoes. "Put your bag here," you put it. "Passport," you show it because we are being protected. Protection is very expensive. Protection demeans us, dehumanizes us, makes brothers and sisters enemies, suspicious of each other. See what we have come to!

All Humanity Unified by Love

So, a society which has been unified through fear and temptation is paralleling the religious domination of the past with a political domination in the present. The instruments used are the same – fear and temptation. How can we overcome? Love, naturally – nothing else. And love has no political frontiers, has no government, has no society, because anything that is universal must have transcended these divisive tendencies which are ruling our lives today.

I hope that with Sahaj Marg at our disposal, and with the grace of the Masters, we can attempt to build a society which will be unified because of love. In such a society there will be no fear. Where there is no fear there is no need for protection. Where there is no fear and no protection, we are free. Yesterday we were talking about some prisons in some country, I think in Sweden, which are made so beautifully that they are better than houses. And people would prefer to be in jail. They are well looked after, they are fed properly, videos are shown, movies are shown. What is wrong with such a prison? We only forget that today the whole world is a prison like that – full of good living, boutiques, and we think we are free, we are happy. And we are what – not afraid of life? But if anyone of you can say, “I’m not afraid of life,” that would be a lie. Because as philosophers have said throughout the history of philosophy, it is not death which is frightening, it is life which is frightening.

So, brothers and sisters, I recommend that you think of yourselves as one human element, just one part of life. Because life is not only human beings, life is everywhere. Plants are alive, animals are alive, birds are alive, and I cannot say I will love only human beings. If anyone of us is capable of love, that love must be

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all-embracing. It must embrace the whole universe. Therefore, Babuji said, in such a heart the whole universe will exist.

I pray that you will all have the courage and the love to aspire to such an existence, to build such a heart within yourself where you can say, "I and the Universe are one." Thank you.

The Need for Unification of Humanity

I wish to continue with yesterday's thoughts about humanity coming together as one entity. You see, the human life must exist as a whole – loving each other, trusting each other, helping each other. That is how we are supposed to live.

The masters of spirituality in all ages have tried to bring this behaviour, this ideal of human brotherhood, but unfortunately even in spirituality we have these groups – we have gurus, we have their disciples, and again we become compartmentalized, like we have Christians who are disciples of Sai Baba, of I don't know, so many others. So every time we try to bring about a unification of humanity, it seems the normal human tendency is to segregate themselves into groups, isolate themselves into groups, and we suffer the same consequences. It does not matter whether we are segregated because of religion, or colour, or race. Even spirituality – if it segregates us into small clusters here

and there all over the world, it is not the unification that, I think, the spiritual powers which are governing us want.

As Babuji Maharaj has said, you all know, "Where religion ends, spirituality begins." But we often forget the next phrase, "Where spirituality ends, Reality begins." We don't appreciate commonly that spirituality too has to come to an end. Like a baby is born, it becomes a child, it becomes a youth, it becomes an adult, it becomes old, and then what? It begins the next life, *la vie éternelle*, the brighter world, et cetera, you see. There is no end to life, and if we start with segregation, the segregation becomes like the branch of a tree – this going this way, that going that way, losing contact.

So it is very important to remember that spirituality too ends – not the ideal of spirituality, of love, brotherhood, mutual aid, compassion, mercy – they never end, because those are the qualities of human life, but the segregation, whether it is racial, the political system, religious or spiritual. So we have to work towards this ideal of creating a spiritual brotherhood where we are not divided by gurus. And that can happen only when all these practices which are taught by different systems, different gurus, at one point coalesce, and then like the seed which is planted in the ground which has to die in a sense, the shell surrounding it has to go, become rotten, and then out comes the sprout.

So we have to work with this ideal in mind too, that my guru is my guru, but he is not the real guru in the sense that he is a Sahaj Marg guru, he is a spiritual guru. And we can realize this only when, from the external master to the interiorization, in that process we succeed – not to lose the attachment or give up the attachment,

The Need for Unification of Humanity

but to transcend the material attachment to the material form of the master and create an internal association, a permanent association, that now He and I are one.

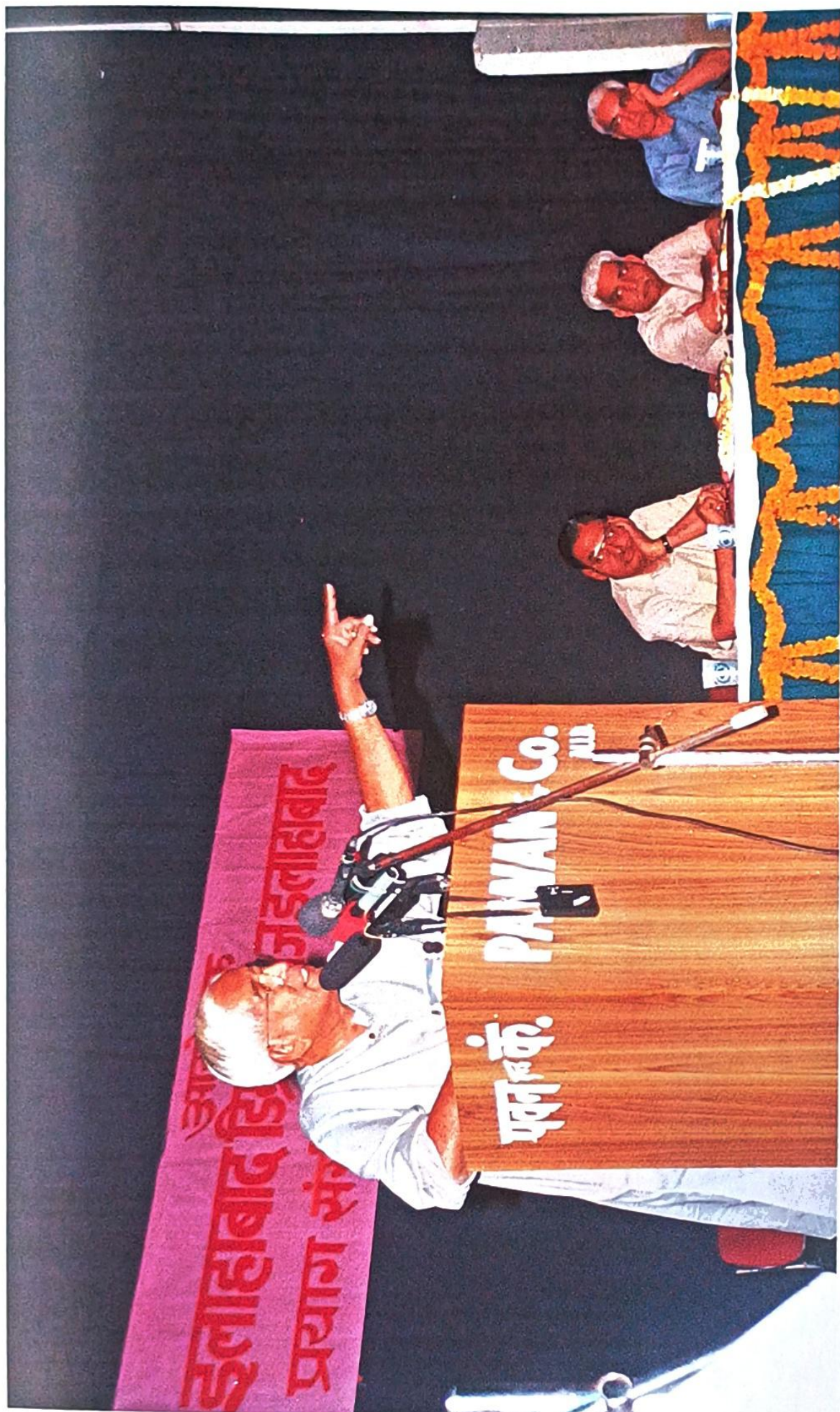
You have read in Babuji's books when his spiritual journey was complete, what Lalaji Maharaj told him. He said, "Today you and I are one, and none can say that there is any difference between you and me." Then there is no more Sahaj Marg, there is no more Lalaji and Babuji. They are there separately; they are there also as one. It is a mystery how two can be separate and yet one. We try this in our mutual human relationships; however close we become, we are still two. There is a couplet in one of the famous poems in India, Kabir I think, where he says, "Even though You are inside my heart," he speaks to the Beloved, Divine, he says, "Even though You are inside my heart, yet the distance between You and me is so big, I cannot bear it, I cannot tolerate it."

So this idea of separateness has to go, that I am here, the master is there, or the master is in the brighter world. You see, everything is a mental construct. We construct these mental differences. Babuji used to say there were certain abhyasis who came to Shahjahanpur who were not attentive, who were always thinking of something else, their home, their family. He used to tell me, "Look here. They are at home, only their body is here." And he said, "It's no use." Bodies are of no use. What use is the body? Because it is born, it's going to die. It will be buried or burnt or thrown into the sea, whatever, you see. So there is no use if the body of the abhyasi is here but the soul is somewhere else. Per contra, there were abhyasis, he said, "Even when they are in Madras or Punjab or, I don't know, Timbuktu,

they are always with me. Their bodies are somewhere but they are always with me." Such people feel the presence of the Master; they are always with the Master wherever they may be.

You see, whenever an abhyasi in deep meditation experiences the presence of the Master, we must understand that the Master is always present. His presence is eternal; his presence is always with us, because he is not a separate presence for each one of us. The air I breathe is the same air as you breathe. You cannot say "My air" and "Your air." If there is not air here, none of us have air. So if the Master is not everywhere, none of us have the Master. Then what happens when we experience the presence of the Master? At that moment we have forgotten ourselves, and we are really there where he is, always. So, that is why this is such a profound experience in deep meditation, that suddenly you smell the hookah sometimes, you feel him.

And then, you see, what happens when the meditation ends? "That's all," you say, and we plunge back into ourselves. That is the mistake we make. Instantly we recover ourselves, in a sense, and we become this mundane human creature. The contact is lost, not because he has broken it, but because I have broken it, we have broken it. So, Babuji said, "Constant remembrance in a sense, is to keep that presence alive, even when I open my eyes, even when the sitting is over, I still feel his presence because I have not cut it." And the big spiritual truth is that once the Master establishes a connection with a disciple, he cannot cut it. His connections are not made to be cut. We cut it. We cut it by becoming human again after the sitting.



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The Need for Unification of Humanity

We cut it by diverting our attention from spiritual to material too much. We cut it sometimes because we lose faith and we say, "Enough. No more Sahaj Marg."

So you see, to keep this eternal connection which, from his side, is always eternal...he has no option, he has no choice because, not existing in time, how can he limit his connection to a time context or a time frame? He cannot do it! But we are the creatures who are temporal, who are time bound, habit bound, culture bound, bound by so many things, and we say, "Now it is enough. I have experienced the Master today." Out come the famous journals; we make our note in the journal, and then maybe six years later, ten years later, we again have a profound experience. Then tears come to our eyes, "I once experienced long ago." So our spiritual experiences become like dreams, to remind us of what had been established, of what remains established, but what in our foolish, limited, human consciousness we have cut.

So brothers and sisters, you see, this presence is also such a presence that the more of us experience at the same time, the more permanent it can be. You know, it is like sharing. When you are sitting alone in a restaurant, all by yourself, however good the food, you feel lonely. If there are three friends sharing it with you, there is jollity, there is happiness, there is mutuality. If you are always together, there is always joy. So the more of us who can participate in this adventure of keeping this presence of the divine Master alive with us, the more solid it becomes, the more concrete it becomes, the more permanent it becomes.

So that is the reason why we have to become one block of human beings. If two of you are in the darkness here,

and two of you are in the sunshine outside, you cannot share the same experience. All of you, if you want to be in the sun, all of you must be outside – outside these protective walls, outside these doors and windows, free. Freedom means no protection – what I said yesterday you see. I cannot have ten bodyguards around me and claim I am free. It's a jail. It's another prison – a prison in which I think I am safe. To be totally free is to be totally exposed, totally in the presence of the Divine; therefore, totally divinely protected. But you cannot at that time demand human protection, under human circumstances of protection, under human methods of protection.

So I hope you will all realize the need for building a human brotherhood, where even spirituality must not segregate us into groups. Like we say, "Today the Spanish group has come; yesterday we had the group from Switzerland." Even in Sahaj Marg we have groups, we have separatist tendencies. That is why the need comes for us to make at least Sahaj Marg one group. When you have drops of water, you will sometimes find one drop is big enough to flow, and it mixes with the next drop and becomes a bigger drop. You can see this on the walls of your shower. The moment it touches a drop, it becomes one – cohesiveness. But human beings are not like that. We are always coming together, separating. This is also reflected in your dance patterns – changing partners, coming together, changing partners, coming together. Culture always reflects what is inside you – your native desires, your wishes, your patterns.

So it is an urgent necessity, I believe, because I have been getting some indications, you see, that the spiritual masters of all ages, who form a sort of a guiding

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principle in another dimension, are not happy with what is happening in this world. And we have to respond by taking upon ourselves a sense of responsibility driven by love for human beings, to create a society which is the pattern on which the Divine wants us to build. And I pray that this can be realized as a concrete reality, a spiritual reality, a reality of love, soon. Thank you.

Freedom

If I'm not free, it is impossible to speak. *Pour quoi?* [Why?] Because, if a bird's wings are cut, it cannot fly, no? In Sahaj Marg, we have the idea of freedom. Not, you know, the French revolution – *liberté, égalité, fraternité, oui!* [Liberty, equality, fraternity, yes!] I subscribe to all these things with my heart, but if you want to be free, you must allow others to be free also, because if it is freedom, it is freedom for everybody. You cannot have freedom only for yourself, and everybody else is in bondage.

So this is the problem in the modern world of freedom, that some are more free, some are less free, some are not free. You see it in your politics, you see it in your economics, you see it in your civil life; some countries are more free than others, and they want to be free by not allowing anybody else to come into their countries. Babuji Maharaj said, "When you close the door of your house, you may keep others out, but remember, you have locked yourself inside." You are your own prisoner. It does not matter if the house

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Freedom

is a small one or a big one like this hall, or a whole country; it is still a prison. Imagine if all the doors were locked now and somebody announced, "You cannot go out!" What would happen? Pandemonium. "We are not free!" And somebody says, like me or Fausto, "But it's a big hall, you see, *et nous avons Chariji ici avec nous* [we have Chariji here with us]." "*Basta!*" [Enough!] you say. "What is the use of Chariji if all the doors are closed?"

So, if you are to be free and the doors are to be open, you must be free to go; others must be free to come. This does not exist today. Does it exist? No. It exists for a few people at a few places at some times – not for all, everywhere, all the time. Therefore, freedom today is a lie. Yes or no? *Oui ou non?* (Audience: "Oui!") *Non! N'existe pas*, [it doesn't exist], freedom. So, *la liberté est finie* [Freedom is finished]. *Et quand nous n'avons pas la liberté, nous n'avons pas la fraternité aussi* [And when we don't have freedom, we don't have brotherhood either]. Yes, how can there be a brotherhood when you are better, she is worse, somebody is not free, somebody is free. *Où est l'égalité?* [Where is equality?] *N'existe pas* [Doesn't exist]. So that is a second lie. And if there is no freedom and if there is no equality, there cannot be a brotherhood, a fraternity. *C'est tout* [That's all]. Yes or no? Yes.

Now, in Sahaj Marg, we are always saying that we are a society where there is no discrimination because of colour, race, sex, education, power, et cetera. So we are really trying to create what the French revolution tried long ago. And tomorrow they're going to celebrate as if they have achieved these things. It is going on everywhere, all over the world. We celebrate that which does not exist. If it does not exist, what is the use of

celebrating? If it exists, what is the need to celebrate? Babuji Maharaj said, "If you are conscious you are free, you are still conscious of lack of freedom." *N'est-ce pas?* [Isn't it?] So freedom from freedom is the real freedom.

We have to work for all these things in our Sahaj Marg – to make our people *really* equal, create a real brotherhood – no more Italians, no more French, no more Indians. And therefore, I am trying initially to create a Shri Ram Chandra Mission Europe. You see, like my body – I have legs, I have hands, I have a head, et cetera. But if I don't exist, they don't exist. When I say "I", it is not the body. Everybody knows this. But still we are spending so much time and money on this body, protecting it, trying to beautify it, flaunt it, *comme ça* [like that], you know. And we are beautiful, they are dirty, they are black, they are, you know, et cetera.

So we want, first, Shri Ram Chandra Mission Europe. As I said twice in France, in Paris, you have a Europe now, supposed to be there, politically, economically. But is it true? I don't think so, because there are still, you know, invisible boundaries, invisible frontiers, localized nationalities. Until these exist, you cannot say that there is a Europe. Of course, certainly it is on the map, you see. It has been there for centuries and, fortunately, people cannot destroy that, because God created it. But we are cutting and dividing, you know, and because now it is advantageous, we are playing a childish game, a children's game. What is that game? You know that game with a lot of pieces, which you put in? Puzzle, jigsaw puzzle. So, first you cut everything into pieces, now try to assemble it and say, "Oh! We have created a Europe. *Voilà!* [That's it!]" So first it was a few countries, eight or nine, then very gracefully, very, what should

Freedom

I say, generously, they included some poorer nations, including, I think, Italy, the Czech Republic, Yugoslavia.

Now suppose you are able to move these walls and make the room bigger and bigger...still there is an outside, there is an inside. Still there are doors. Still there is the power of admission, and the power of exclusion. And even then, if the doors are locked, you will be prisoners of your own creation. Yes or no? Yes. I mean, it's very clear. So until there are no walls, you cannot say, "We're a free people," because now you are only selecting the people you will accept. It is like a club, a select club, a rich man's club, a club of power, you see. Because, suppose any organization has the power of accepting or rejecting, can we say it is a free organization? Yes or no? No.

Sahaj Marg has no such restriction. Everybody, from anywhere in the world is welcome. Everybody can come, everybody can go. There is no restriction. There are no fees. We are not having any restriction of education. Is it a free organization? Is it human? Is it the real democracy of a free people, for a free people, by a free people? Yes or no? (Audience: "Yes.")

So Sahaj Marg is today, in my opinion, the only organization in this world fulfilling the requirements of this definition of "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*" [Freedom, equality, fraternity]. *Vive le Sahaj Marg!* [Long live Sahaj Marg!] (Applause).

Guru Poornima

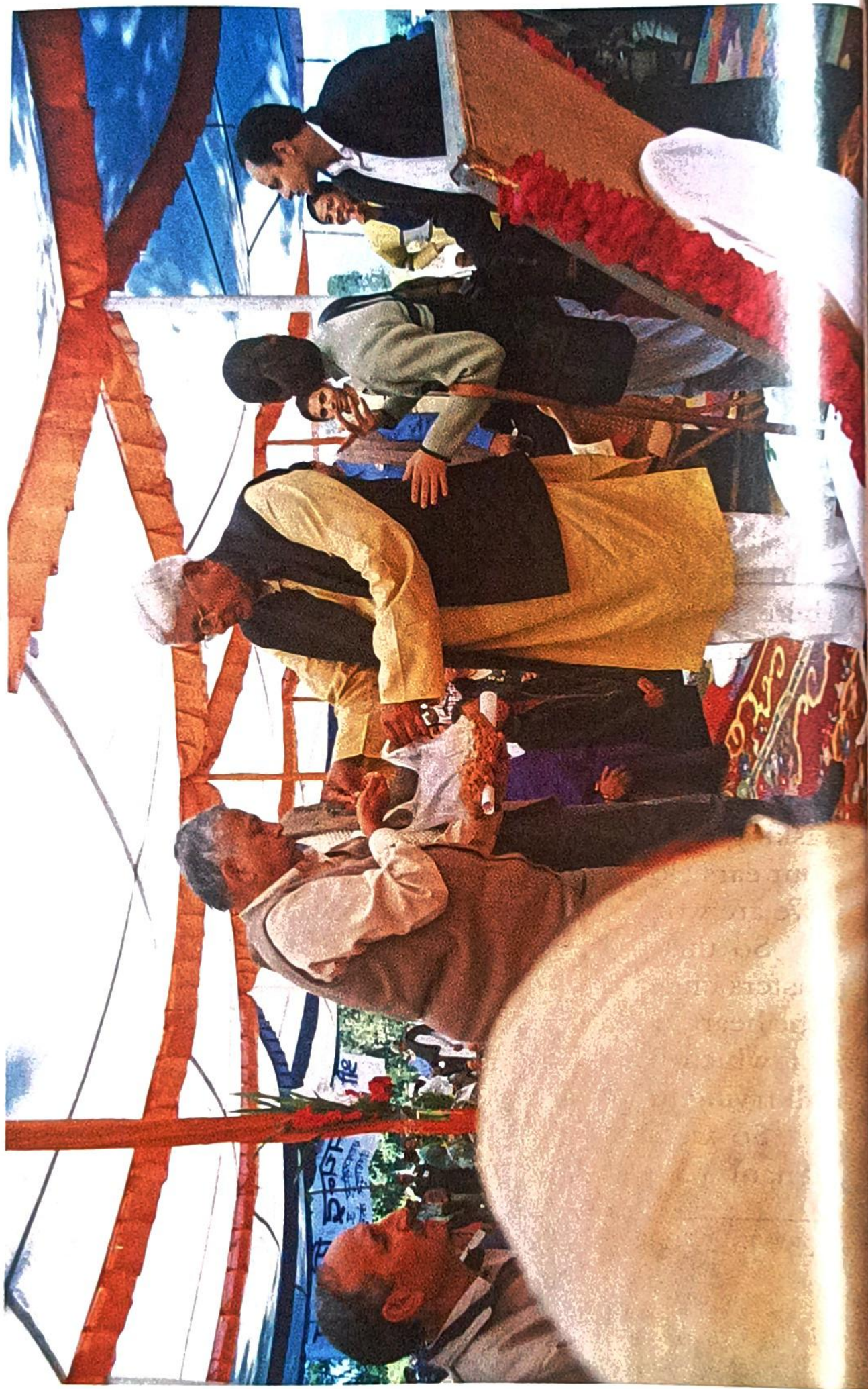
Today is the festival of Guru Poornima, and Babuji Maharaj told me that, when the abhyasi is with the Guru on this particular day, and they have a sitting, they progress hundreds of times faster. (Applause)

This was not planned, that today we should be here, and I did not know today is Guru Poornima until yesterday evening. So I think it's a special gift to everybody here that today is a special blessing from Babuji Maharaj. (Applause)

...It is not luck; it is benediction. Luck is for worldly affairs. You know the Sanskrit word for luck? *Adrishta* – that which we cannot see. That is divine grace. So, today is like that, you see.

So I am happy that we are all so many people together here today. And you must have felt what happened during the sitting; it was very profound, and I have not recovered from it so far. I hope all of you will continue to be drunk-like with today's sitting, till next Guru Poornima. Thank you.





Working Together

I have to go to another meeting, you know, to see how better this organization can serve humanity, how we can continue to make walls disappear, how important it is to make the people who are responsible for this organization work together, with friendship, freedom and brotherhood – because they are not really existing here. Even in these Italian statutes, I believe, there were so many problems.

You know, when you don't do anything, like me, when you don't do anything, you are passive, you have your eyes open, your ears open, and your mouth closed – you can hear everything. You get information without asking. But normally, we are keeping our eyes closed, our ears closed, and our mouth open. We hear nothing! We are working in that way sometimes.

So this meeting is to make sure my brothers and sisters understand each other, that they co-operate with the heart, not just the mind, and build a real Sahaj Marg, of which Babuji Maharaj dreamed, and which you are all trying to bring into reality, into existence, here.

So we shall meet this evening again for satsangh. Thank you.

A Taste of Eternity

Even though we start this seminar only tomorrow morning, I would like to say something as a prelude. Jacky just now announced that we need nothing but your co-operation. Actually, that is not correct. I mean, we need your co-operation, but I don't ask anymore for even co-operation. I demand nothing. (Laughs). How do you say in French? *Je n'exige rien*. Because, if you co-operate, you benefit. If you are here for the fun, you have the fun. If you want to take photographs, you take photographs. We are having liberty. This seminar will celebrate the liberty of the spirit, the liberty of the individual.

Because I have been, you know, sort of thinking and brooding over the spiritual life, and I have come to the conclusion that when we demand, we get nothing. I'm using the word demand in the English sense, not just merely ask, demand, *exiger*. So we offer; if you like, you accept. I will always be here to keep on offering; assisting you to accept; helping you after you accept with what you have to do – but no demands. In fact,

A Taste of Eternity

these three, four years, I did not come here deliberately, because I wanted to give you all a holiday, *une petite vacance* – no Chariji. Because it gets to be too much of a bore to have somebody coming again and again, insisting that you must meditate, you must do cleaning, you must do this, you must do that, you must not do this, you must not do that. So I thought, maybe there was too much Sahaj Marg for the last sixteen, seventeen years, and maybe you require some time to sort of cogitate, think, meditate, whether you want Sahaj Marg, whether it is necessary. Because my saying it is necessary or Babuji saying it is necessary...”OK, *ça va!*” [OK, all right!] as you say. It was necessary for Lalaji, it was necessary for Babuji, maybe it was necessary for me, too. *Peut-être!* [Maybe]. So I’m here, you see.

I have an obligation, which I have acquired in obedience to my Master’s wishes. And that obligation was nothing but my gratitude to him for whatever he did for me, which I know about or I do not know about. Because in spirituality the unfortunate thing is, we cannot know what we are getting. And because we do not know what we get, we are careless. We don’t look deeply. This is not like buying a fan, or a crystal or a piece of jewellery, where you see, where you estimate, where you touch your pocket and see how much money you have got, and you buy or you don’t buy. After buying, you may regret it. Sometimes if you don’t buy it, you may regret it. But here, because you do not know what you are getting, it is very difficult to understand the need for a practice, for a discipline, which is going on saying, do this, do that, don’t do this, don’t do that, ten of this, ten of that, *Les dix maxims* [the ten maxims]. “Get up before sunrise.” “*Pour quoi?*” [Why?] No? Seems

ridiculous. So you have to assess, and perhaps you have to pray that you may be given the ability to see what you are getting, what you have got already, and maybe to find out how much more there is to progress on the path, before we really know, you see.

Because it is like, ...suppose there is an elevator, and there is, like the great scientist Einstein, who gave an example – get into an infinite elevator and from the first to the second floor is maybe infinity. When are you going to know, and what are you going to know? Because you are shut up in that lift and you cannot see, you cannot understand, so you cannot perceive. There is nobody to tell you. It is a very beautiful example he has used for gravitation. Maybe some of you should read it. So here, like that, unless we are able to be sensitive and really concerned about whether we are moving and towards what, it becomes an exercise in a futile way, and after a little time we lose interest, because we are like children.

You know children; they want to go to the seaside. You religiously get up at 4:30 in the morning to avoid the crowd from Paris going out. You start and within half an hour, you find you are part of a *bouchon* [traffic jam], twelve kilometres *de bouchon*. *Voilà!* [There it is.] You are stopped. Now the children want to go to the toilet, the wife is nervous, the husband is already tired, half an hour after leaving the home. And of course in this wonderful land of Europe, you cannot even get out for emergency reasons. Of course there are wonderful inventions to tackle such, shall we say, delicate or perhaps indelicate situations, and by the time you reach Nice, or wherever you are going on the Côte d'Azur, you are fed up with your holiday. There you find the

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beach-people lying side by side; you have to literally sometimes walk over those bodies to get to where you want to go. You get into the sea; there are aquaplanes, there are motorcycles going on water, there are boats pulling people who are trying to fly over water. It's like a big circus. Only thing, there are no animals but only human beings and machines.

This is the modern holiday in Europe, and for this we are willing to spend thousands of French franc or modern equivalent in euros, and put up with all that suffering, with all that frustration. But we do it because we see that there is a sea there, and I am here, and I have to go. But this ocean of bliss, I don't know where it is. (Laughs) Why is it called an ocean of bliss? Is there bliss in it? Is there an ocean? And I think, "No, no, when I was in the Bay of Biscay, it was rough; when I was passing the Channel, it was awful. How can the sea be blissful?" I mean, I'm just giving an example of how we think, relating our material experience to our spiritual possibility. And then we say it is better that we go into the woods, have a long walk; and if you hear a cuckoo it is a wonderful experience. I remember when we had Augerans, one day I was in the woods and we heard 'cuckoo'. Instantly everybody froze, because it has become so rare to hear a cuckoo. Then you strain your ears to hear the next 'cuckoo' and it doesn't come. So this is something like that. You see, the onus of achievement is purely on you, on the abhyasi. If you want to achieve, you want to get something, you have to do something, you have to become something.

And I am tired of this word co-operation, co-operation, co-operation. Co-operate with what, with whom and why? So you see, we have to be adult enough

to understand that in this world we have to work for everything, and it applies more to spirituality than to anything else. The difference is, here you work outside, you lift chairs, you throw things, you climb up ladders, you fix things, and you heave a sigh of relief and say *voilà, c'est fini* [There, it's over.] But in spirituality you have to work *inside* yourself.

I remember a quotation from a great saint, who was talking to a young man who was used to going to the mountains and oceans. He had been practising for some days or for some months but he said, "Master, what am I to do? Where are the mountains I have to climb? Where are the oceans across which I have to swim?" He said, "My son, they are all inside you." So you see, we go to Switzerland, we see the mountains. Some of us are happy to see them, like myself. Some want to climb them. They are happy after they have finished. Some want to go up and do this skiing. Wonderful! Here, what are we to do? Unless we still our mind, we still our mind totally, and are prepared to get the feedback from inside, as they say in occult books, "Hear the still voice of the silence," we can never know where we are going, what we are doing, what we are receiving. These meditation sessions are nothing but creating, or trying to create – sitting quietly, in silence, amidst silence – that state of receptivity which can reveal to us that something is going on. And progressively we are able to see.

It's like when you fly in an aeroplane and you pass through the cloud layers. For some moments you don't see anything and the plane is shivering perhaps, and there is a moment of fear. And if you have not read any science and you are something like a poor Indian you say, "But why does it shudder like this when it is going

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through air?" I had this conversation the other day in Bombay. Why does a plane shudder when it passes through a cloud or even through a differential layer of air? Because there is a differing density. I mean we are used to cars bumping on roads, but we are not used to planes shuddering, shivering, sometimes dropping vertically twenty metres, thirty metres in an air pocket. It beats our imagination. Therefore, you have this *ceinture* [seatbelt]. You have to keep it fastened.

Here there is nothing. We don't know what is going to happen, when it is going to happen. Because we are used to this modern psychology, the modern inventiveness, where you get everything instantly. Instant coffee, instant tea, twenty years back, were a great innovation. You opened a packet, threw the thing into water, stirred it and you had coffee, *voilà!* Today it is not just that. Sitting at your computer, you can order your tickets, you can buy tickets for the theatre. You can even buy your coffin if you are so intending to do it. You can specify, you can pay for it across the Internet, and all within two or three minutes. You can buy books over Internet.

We are getting more and more instant-oriented, and spirituality is shifting your orientation to infinite-orientation. These material goals can be handled, and had, and acquired, here and now. Spiritual goals may be here and now, may be after an eternity of time. It depends on you. So you see, to participate in the spiritual life with all your heart requires a courageous heart initially, a determined heart, which says, the secrets of the heart are not revealed like looking out of the window of an aircraft; the secrets of the heart are revealed to one who can penetrate what one great

unknown author has called *The Clouds of Unknowing*. It is a very wonderful title of that book. Unfortunately nobody knows who wrote it, *The Clouds of Unknowing*.

So that cloud of unknowing is within us. And unless you are very, very, very, very serious about what you want to know, and extremely patient to wait to pierce those clouds...I mean, you have a heavy cloud layer here and you may not see the sun for a few days; it's beyond your control, with all your modern technology. Here, there is no technology, except, shall we say, the beautiful touch-less touch of love. Love must clear those clouds of unknowing. Patience must give the clouds of unknowing time to clear, and present to you the vision of what is supposed to be adorable, desirable beyond all expectations, and which, when you see, you can never forget. You cannot move back after you have seen that. "Having seen which, you cannot return," this is what the Veda says.

So I recommend to all of you to create, cultivate, hearts of the lion. That is what Babuji said. He said, "I want lions, not sheep." Sheep are always looking down, munching at the grass. The lion roars in defiance, goes where nothing else can go. We want the spirit of that great movie series that I love to see – Star Trek. "To go where no man has gone before." But that is technology-oriented. You have a wonderful space ship, star ship, and you are inside, comfortably ensconced. You have doctors, you have everything that you want, machinery *par excellence*. But here everything is in *me*. I am the patient, I am my own doctor, I am the traveller, and until I find the guide within me, I have to be my own guide. So, the sooner we find the guide inside, believe him, trust him, let him advance before us, the better for us.

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So, without this heart full of longing, full of courage and full of patience, I am afraid that spiritual aspiration will remain a mere aspiration. And there will be no participation from abhyasis, except participation by giving two hundred euros as *inscription* [registration], as they say in French, listening to some talks, eating, I hope, good food, that is yet to be seen, and of course it is a sort of *vacance* you know. The trouble is that our spiritual seminars do partake of the essence of a holiday, because we are able to leave our work, get away from our families perhaps, and relax for three days in some sort of nirvana, artificial nirvana, that we create. And that is not true. It should be...I don't want to say it, but it should be a hot spot. It should make us squirm in our seats when we sit here and say, "Why am I here? What am I doing if I'm not doing what I should be doing? Am I here just to enjoy the ambience?"

When Jacky announced this seminar, repeatedly it was promised that it is a wonderful place – forty-four hectares, horses, places for children, swimming pools. Why do we have to emphasise these things when we emphasise a seminar? Are we, sort of, trying to entice you to make you come here? To console you in advance that even if you don't find spirituality, you have all this? It is a little sorrowful to me that we have to be tempted to come.

I am always fond of that famous statement of Christ – I once spoke about this, probably twenty years ago – when Jesus stands with his arms akimbo and says, "Suffer them to come unto me." I interpret that suffering also as suffering, and also as permission; "Permit them to come to me," you see. Why, "Suffer them to come unto me"? Because this permission is

something which you have to treat as...I'm sorry to say it, but it is, in a sense, a suffering.

We suffer all the time. When you get into a plane and you get those ridiculous seats where you wish you had two (pairs of) knees instead of one, so you could fold it more and more, you know, collapse into yourselves... where you cannot afford to have the feeling that you have to go to the toilet, because you don't know when it will be possible...where you are afraid to eat, because again you have to go to the toilet, you are afraid to drink... is it not suffering? Just because they give you six video shows over an eight-hour air journey, and magazines galore? But three seats...and that man is stepping over your thigh all the time, this woman is stepping over you all the time on this side, and you wonder, "What am I doing here?" Is it not suffering? Is it not suffering to leave your Paris in your wonderful cars, whether it is a Mercedes Benz or a Volvo, or one of these humble Number Five Citroens? Don't you suffer on your nine hour journey, which becomes fourteen hours to Nice, pretending to be happy all the time? Is it not suffering?

Your *mind* makes you think you are enjoying. Your mind makes you think you are going to something which is another nirvana, by the ocean. Even before you leave home you are, all of you, without exception, hoping that you were back upstairs in your flats or your apartment, not wasting hard-earned money on ephemeral happiness, which is promised but never delivered. Eating rubbish, junk food, more and more... What have you to show when you come back? You have to come back dreading the day of your work. Your wife is dreading putting the children back to school, cleaning up the kitchen, cleaning up the apartment, everybody with frayed tempers. And this is a holiday!

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May I suggest that *this* is a true holiday for all of you. A true holiday, where the spirit can soar, where the soul can expand, where there are no worries, not even spiritual worries, not even fears – no fears, even of death. Because during that moment or hour or two of meditation, every one of us has experienced, however briefly, a condition of bliss, which is what brings you back here again and again. Were it not for that, I would be facing an empty hall, and Jacky would be wondering what happened to his temptation of swimming pools and horses for children.

It is that spark of divinity, that momentary bliss, experiencing which, you can never forget, and the memory of which, and the hope for which, brings you back here again and again. And may I assure you that if you continue steadfastly, again I repeat, courage in the heart, hope, and faith, which alone can make patience possible, you will taste more and more of that eternity, more and more of that bliss, until it pervades your life as a continuous, not only a matter of consciousness, but of real experience. I pray for this. Thank you.

Youth – A Time for Aspiration

I have always found that youth is the best time for all good things. I'm sure you will all agree. You will agree for one reason, because now that you are young, you have everything good, and therefore you are all ecstatically agreeing, but that is not what I meant. You have seen horses in big paddocks – how the young horses run around kicking their heels, neighing, like that. That's not what I mean.

My idea is that life begins somewhere and goes on, you see. And when we are born, we bring a great deal of joy, happiness, light, into a family. And in that light we bask, like we sit outside in the sun in winter, and we soak in the warmth. And it's a good time, because it gives joy and happiness to everybody. Then, as we grow up, we begin to differentiate ourselves little by little. We acquire a will of our own; a direction that may be good or bad, but we insist on having it, forgetting that, you know, if at that stage things go wrong, then that's a very difficult thing to correct later on. You know, if you have a mountain, and a stream goes that way

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instead of going this way, the river will eventually flow north instead of south. It's just an example, because one cannot say which way the river should flow, but that is why this young age is a time of opportunity – for decision, for choice, because everything is open.

When you are as old as I am, there is no more any choice. When an oak tree has grown twenty-five, thirty metres, it has no more choice. But when it is a young sapling, it can bend, it can be blown away, it can be destroyed. So, that sapling needs to be protected, and this protection comes from so many sources. It comes from the parents; it comes from the family, it comes from your society, it comes from school, from government. They are all expected to contribute to a protective environment in which you can grow properly. And unfortunately, nowadays, at least in the last thirty, forty years, all these sources of protection are cracking up – less and less, including parents, I'm sorry to say. Parents don't give guidance; they are too busy with themselves. There was a time when mothers never worked, so *they* provided the source of happiness, love and protection. Today, all women work. So they are no more to be looked upon as sources of love and protection. They are immersed in their own life, making *their* life. So children are largely left to themselves, and they grow in an atmosphere of both aspiration and resentment. They resent that they don't get enough attention from their parents, who are too busy to look after them, who are too busy earning money to waste on holidays, about which I was talking this morning. You would rather have some love in the family than a big holiday in Nice or, I don't know, Antibes, wherever it is, isn't it?

You know, once I was in Bhopal about to conduct a satsangh like this. There were five minutes, six minutes to begin satsangh. A tall girl in school uniform came. She just stood in front of me, like that, and she said, "I hate you!" So I just smiled and said, "Why? Because I've never met you, I don't know you. Why should you hate me?" She said, "You have taken my parents away from me. My father doesn't look at me; my mother doesn't look at me. Even on Sundays, they leave the breakfast on the table, like leaving it for a dog, and go off for satsangh. I have nothing else now." She was tall and well-built, so I thought she must be, you know, good enough to be an abhyasi. So I just told her, "Sit down. We will have a satsangh now, and later we will talk." You know what happens after that (chuckles). There is magic! Because in satsangh, there is this love shown in a way that you cannot express in any human fashion. What is the way of showing love in a human fashion? Shaking hands, hugging, kissing, making love? That's all. Animals do it, the birds do it, and everybody does it. What is so special about it? There used to be a song, "The bees do it, the birds do it..." I don't know if you know it. But here, there is a love which does not demand, which gives. In the human level, you try as much as you want to give without asking – it is impossible.

So here we get all that we need, which our heart needs, though it may or may not know it. That's why you are all here, obviously. Most of you are children of Sahaj Marg parents, and that's very good, because you've grown up in the same environment in which your parents have achieved something in spirituality. You find that they are different from other parents, at least in some ways. You may not have taken their protection but they have

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tried to protect you. They have given you the shade of spirituality. They have given you a spiritual aspiration with which to work. Aspiration is not the same as, for instance, expectation or ambition. Ambition is very self-centred, material, money-oriented, power-oriented, position-oriented. Aspiration has to do with higher values of life – how to become something; not how to have something. Ambition is about having. “Oh, I’m ambitious, I want to have a...I don’t know, the latest BMW car, and a nine-bedroom house.” Aspiration says, “I want to be a good man, a good member of society, a good father, a good mother.”

So I’m happy that the next generation of Sahaj Marg, by and large, all over the world, are the children of our abhyasis – abhyasis who are my age, abhyasis who are their age and abhyasis who are like this young lady here, who just got married. Their children are all coming slowly, because there is an example within the family for them to follow. And if the parents exercise their life or live their life as good abhyasis should... You know, it is like dropping a stone in a pond and the ripple spreads. By itself good things spread. You must have noticed, you are all old enough to notice, good things spread by themselves, bad things have to be spread. Crime has to be spread by terror, by fear, by bribery, by corruption, by destruction. Good things are not spread like that. Good things spread quietly, from example. So, if you find your parents are good, they are loving, they are harmonious in their existence, that the family is, in a literal way, alive with love. I mean, nobody is going to refuse such a life.

So you see, youth is a very important time, because after childhood, you are becoming a youth. Now there

are even more opportunities, for the good or for the bad. At that time of choice, if you don't have loving guidance...guidance does not mean locking the girl up in her room so that she should not meet her boyfriend at midnight. It's not that; that doesn't work. You know the proverb in English – "love laughs at locksmiths." Of course, they meant it in a different sense, that love will always find a way. But we are now not talking about love. We are talking about what young people call a good time, you know – Jazz, Rolling Stones, I don't know the names; a little drinking, a little smoking. You start a little, little, you know, and unfortunately... In the old days a few used to get caught; now many get caught. And then by the time they realize they are destroying their lives, their future, their opportunities, it may be too late to help them. Because they have become hardened, they have become addicted, and what is worse, they have become cynical and say, "Well, this is the world I live in. What else do you expect me to do?"

Unfortunately that is not true; this is not the world we live in; it is the *small* world of crime, and corruption, and violence, and sex into which you fall, get caught, out of some moment of temptation, from which you are unable to get out. And then you blame society, you blame your parents; often you blame Sahaj Marg, too. You say, "Oh, if my parents had looked after me...." Yes, but were you willing to be looked after? It's a good thing in Sahaj Marg we have had children who have been, you know, *poco poco*, shall we say, and they have come back. It's good because they have the opportunity to come back. I mean, if you go out of the house, unless you have a home, where will you come back to?

I must address the elder generation in this context and tell them how awesome their responsibility is. Because

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if they are only involved with their own enjoyment, with their own material growth, with their own success, they can't contribute in a very large measure to their children's future, whatever it may be. If it is bad, the parents contribute eighty percent to it; if it is good, they contribute more than eighty percent to it. In most cases I find that the parents are to blame, either positively, or through neglect, or through just indifference. "Oh, they are old enough to know what they want." "When I was fifteen..." They start bragging. "When I was fifteen, Chariji..." Yes, when you were fifteen, the world was different. When I was fifteen, the world was much different. When your children are fifteen, we don't know what it is going to be.

So you see, you also have an awesome responsibility. When you think of your future, it is not only *your* future. You are all boys and girls, surely you will get married; many of you are already married. "What about our children?" you must ask. "Is this the world into which I want to bring my children?" Why do you ask such a question? Because you have already known that this world is not a very desirable place. You have experienced it. Some of you have been caught in it, some of you have fallen. Some of you, by the Grace of the Master, have risen again. You are able to hold up your head and you are better for that experience. But not everybody can fall and rise again. They lack the power, they lack the will. They lack the people who can lift them up. Fortunately for us in Sahaj Marg, we have an environment of peace, of tranquillity, of harmony, of spirituality, where we can help without obviously helping you.

You know, people come to me with problems of drug addiction, of abuse, sexual or otherwise, parental

abuse, let down by society, demoralised by their friends. And often all that it needs is a couple of sittings for them to be set right, and they are okay. I mean, I'm sure many of you know this, if not most of you. It has worked with many parents who have tended to go astray. They are back. With children it is easier to work because children know; they have faith in their hearts.

You see this youthful period is a period of aspiration, as I pointed out, because we want what is the best, not in material terms, but in evolutionary terms, in values, in qualities. Childhood is innocence, youth must be a time of aspiration, and then the adult phase must be one of achievement. You see how, step by step, it builds up. Innocence is soon lost, and then if aspiration is not there, and there is only ambition, which today our education is forcing upon us more and more – “You must be this, you must be that, you must be able to afford to fly to New York three times a year, package holidays in Hawaii, et cetera, et cetera,” our aspiration turns to ambition, turns to corruption. Then there is nothing we will not do to get what we are ambitious about, including what the Americans call the “killer spirit.” You know, in America, it is very famous. You have heard John McEnroe talk about it. “Kill the opposition.” “Beat the hell out of the bastard.” These are common terms in American society. “Beat the hell out of the bastard.” I'm quoting. I'm sorry I have to use words such as these in a spiritual assembly, but it is the truth.

We are not to live like that. We are not dogs to fight each other and bleed to death. Even about the dogs, the Bible says, “Dog eats not dog.” But human beings eat each other. We don't care about whom we destroy.

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When a married couple interferes in another married couple's life and this husband takes away that wife, it's a destruction of another couple, a life. "Yes, but she loves me." So? I love your diamond and I take it away from you in the streets? Can you say, "Yes, he loves my diamond. So he took it." Why is this robbery? And that is not robbery? Why, when a girl pinches the husband from another woman, it is not robbery? But she cannot take a *stylo* [pen], which costs probably one euro, or less. That is robbery! Your ethics don't permit you to take your friend's handbag because you like it. "Oh, I like it much better; I'm taking it away," and you watch helplessly? How can society tolerate mere material thefts and label it as theft, and punish people, and put them in jail, but a man who takes another man's wife goes away scot-free? And everybody just, you know..." *C'est ça, c'est la vie*," [It's like that; it's life,] hmm? Don't you think this society is stupidly corrupt, wantonly corrupt, viciously corrupt?

In India we believe that all morality is to be vested with women. I've spoken about this twenty years ago in Augerans, and I was severely criticised. They said "Why only women are responsible?" I said, "Of course, because when it takes two to do something and when one refuses, you have restored morality, isn't it?" In the Gita, it is very explicit. It says, "When women go astray, that society destroys itself." So it is always the woman's code of honour which must say, "*Non, chéri*, you are already married. You have to go back to your wife. If you do this to me today, you will do this to her tomorrow and this to her day after tomorrow." Isn't it? You have all seen it, you have all experienced it.

Every one of you, or most of you have had your own brother, your father's daughter, your mother's

sister by another husband. I mean it's a shambles – society today, because selfishness prevails, there is no order. Why is this? The statement contains the answer. Selfishness prevails, and not order. Order – morality is order, ethics is order, truth is order. But when we say, "I want and I take what I want," that society is anarchical. You may have wonderful rules of the road, you know, "Keep to the right," "Follow the red light," and "Stop here," you know... *Vous n'avez pas le droit* [You must not] et cetera, et cetera. That is wonderful on the superficial level, to impress foreigners like me. Oh, how disciplined this society is! You say madam to the saleswoman; you stand in a queue; if she is busy for fifteen minutes you will wait. And we pretend we are a wonderful society of educated, healthy and, what else should I say, normal human beings. But all these superficial ethics, good behaviour, obedience to the law, hides a much deeper mess. What you would call a swamp; it stinks, you see.

So, if you want to create your society, my young brothers and sisters, daughters, grand-daughters, you have to work for it. I cannot keep what is not mine. If I fool around with something that is somebody else's, I have given up my right to what I have myself. Beware! It may be tempting, it may be tantalising; it may even be fun. You may even get away with it, for the moment. But there is a divine law which says, you are culpable. And then, when you are thirty, thirty-five, forty, forty-five, fifty, slowly this guilt begins to, you know, eat away your heart. Then you start looking for churches, for psychiatrists, for therapists, and if you are fortunate, you will find Sahaj Marg. Yes, of course! Not everybody finds Sahaj Marg. In a huge world we are only between a hundred thousand, two hundred thousand people.

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And here also we are, by and large, rebellious. "What is this stupid morality of the Indian?" one lady asked me twenty years back. She said, "That is for Indians, not for us." I don't know how she distinguished that, or how she wisely came to that conclusion that Indians are stupid because they are moral, and the white people are great because they can take what they want from wherever they want it. But not material possessions! They can break hearts, they can break couples, they can break marriages, they can destroy their children, send one here, send one there. Which do you think is the better society?

So I repeat, if you want something like that, where what is yours is yours, including *your* husband, and *his* wife, and they are harmoniously together without danger... You know, I used to be shocked when I first used to come to Europe, and hundreds of boys and husbands told me, "My suitcase is always packed." I said, "Why?" He said, "I don't know if, in the evening when I come back, I'll find my wife at home." I'm not joking. These are things which I have heard personally from people who are also here. So what is this state of existence? That your suitcase is always packed because you don't know in the evening whether you are welcome at home or not, or whether she will be there or not?

So you see, to say that the grass is green is not an exaggeration, to say that the sun is shining is not an exaggeration; to say that the society here is like this is not an exaggeration. It is the truth. Every one of you knows it. I'm willing to speak about it. You are not. You want to hide it. You think in hiding it there is safety, there is protection. But you know, medical science says that if you have a wound and if you hide it, it festers,

and one day you may have to cut off your leg. That's what is happening. Here, cutting off the leg is breaking up of a marriage, children in anguish, not knowing where to go, because the child loves both the parents. But it becomes a legal matter. "I want," he says, and "I want," she says. And the children are bewildered. "What happened? Where there was so much love till yesterday evening, what has happened this morning?"

So, I don't want you all growing up like that. And I'm sure *you* don't want to grow up like that. I'm sure those of you who are children of divorced parents have hated your parents for it. If anybody is willing to say no to that, they are bloody liars. Eventually you become reconciled because you have no choice. Your mother is gone with somebody; your father is gone with somebody; you are left to be *partagé* [shared], as the French say – sometimes here, sometimes there. He takes you out for a holiday, she gives you gifts and *voilà*, everything is wonderful. It is not!

So don't make this mistake of rationalising wrongs, wrong doings, corruption, and pretending that if you don't look at it, and if you don't talk about it, it does not exist. You all know that, whether you like it or not, ghosts exist even though you never talk about them, you don't see them. Evil exists although you may not have seen it. Sickness exists, though you may never have been sick. Lies exist, though you may never have told lies. So, by hiding, nothing works. We are only contributing more and more to that stagnation, that stench which, you know, like a pool of water which is there all the time, it stinks.

So be brave; take your life in your hands. Renounce all desires which will interfere with other people's lives. And say, "What is mine, God gives. If I take, it cannot be

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mine.” So this is a time, my young friends, of aspiration being allowed to flower, of desires being put aside and, thereby, beginning to lead to what can eventually be a saintly life.

I pray for all of you. May it be so! Thank you.

Mastering Yourself

I would like to tell you what I felt when I was a new abhyasi. I did not know what is an abhyasi. Did you know when you went to school, what is a student? You learnt little by little. Because when we go to school some are afraid, some are happy, some are afraid of leaving the house, and so on. Each one has their own approach to school. But after some time, we understand what a school is, and vis-à-vis the school, what my position is as a student. Like that, you know, here also it is a process of socialization. We have to learn what we have to learn, first. I'm not playing with words — *je n'ai pas joué avec les mots mais vous avez compris...* I must know what I have to learn first before I can learn it. *Même problème avec les abhyasis.* [Same problem with abhyasis.] *Son vie, sa vie?* [Their life.]

Okay, jokes apart, when we are introduced to swimming, for example, we have this fear of being in one element and going into another element — from land to water. So there is fear. So some coaches advise, “Jump in,” and they add very encouragingly, “Sink or

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swim" (laughs). It is not very encouraging, but it is true. There are other coaches who say, "Lie down on the land, face down, and move your hands and feet as if you are swimming." And however effectively you may do it, you'll never learn to swim, because you are doing it in the wrong place (laughs), isn't it?

So the right thing at the right place at the right time. And this is a very vital combination of time, place and activity. You know for example, you are going on one of these underground roads and exactly at the same time a plane is crossing above you on top – same place, same time, but in the third dimension you are separated – no accident. If all the three dimensions are at the same time, crash. So what to do, where to do, when to do – this is discipline.

We are always frightened of the word discipline, and we are very happy with the word freedom. I come from India, which to most of you is a very ill-disciplined place. I mean if you see a movie of the cars moving and the rickshaws moving and the pedestrians moving, apparently it is chaotic. And that is putting it mildly. Here everything seems to be disciplined – one behind the other. But people are fretting and fuming all the time. So should we have total discipline? Should we have total freedom? Or should it be a benign combination of the two? Benevolent combination?

To be free when you must be free, in a disciplined manner, respecting that other people are also to be free in the same space and in the same time – I think that is the ideal view or vision of life. We are all here in one big hall. Yet for some reason we are all crammed into a little fifty square metre area now, and I'm sure most of you find it very pleasant to do so. Otherwise, would we

be crammed like this? Under different circumstances, it would be exceedingly unpleasant and perhaps unbearable. So what makes the difference between bearable and unbearable? When does fear become confidence? When does a young man who plunged into a swimming pool love to fall in from thirty metres and call it diving, do two and a half turns and show off? When? Ability – mastery.

So life is all about mastering your fear. Because you are still there, the water is still there. Originally you were timidly putting in your big toe and wiggling it in the water. Now you are jumping from thirty metres and loving it. So you see it is self-mastery that allows you to master space, time and the elements, nothing else. Not the hand rails around the swimming pool, not the safety measures, not the things floating in the water to which you can hang if you are afraid of swimming, but your confidence in yourself arising out of having mastered the element. This is what we try to cultivate, create, in each abhyasi who comes here.

In Sanskrit, abhyas means to practice. If you are practicing swimming, you are an abhyasi of swimming. If you are practicing writing, you are an abhyasi of writing. Here we practice meditation, and by definition, we are therefore abhyasis of meditation – nothing esoteric, nothing wonderful. It is a description of what we are doing here. And when do we cease to be abhyasis? When we have mastered ourselves. We don't become Masters but we become masters, each one of himself or herself. That is the culmination of spiritual progress, the spiritual process. It can take time depending on what you do with yourself. If you come and play the fool, and you are trying to play ping-pong and you're

Mastering Yourself

watching a girl swimming in the next tank, you are not going to be a very good table tennis player, though you may be enjoying yourself. So you have to concentrate on what you are doing, give your whole heart and time to it, attention to it, and that shortens the duration of the process.

Therefore we request you to be disciplined, which only means, pay attention to what you have to do, and do it to the best of your ability. It does not mean that we try to restrict your freedom, or infringe on your freedom, or we destroy those great tenets of the French republic, one of which is *Liberté*. You are at liberty to do what you want with yourself. But when you come here, if you want to be involved in a process which will guarantee you mastery over yourself, it has only one disciplinary aspect-attend, pay attention.

So this is all that Sahaj Marg is about. We start timidly without knowing what we have to do. And if with that timid-ness you continue to do what you have to do, the fear goes, because slowly you are mastering the process. Having mastered the process, the journey is completed quickly, and when it is complete, you emerge as a master of yourself. *C'est tout*. [That's all.]

Now if you all would like a sitting, please sit comfortably, I will give you all a special sitting.

Q: Something special will be given?

PR: I don't know. It depends what is happening. Each meditation is a love story. The ardency with which we come to it, is it ever matched by the culmination? It depends on the participants. *Moi et vous, non?* [I and you, no?] And here, who is the I, and who is the you? The closer the two come together,

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comme en amour, une affaire de coeur, comme ça [like in love, a love affair, like that], the closer we are, *pas seulement physiquement, mais avec notre coeur aussi, non?* [not only physically, but with our hearts too, isn't it?] (Applause)

Commencez s'il-vous-plait. [Please start.]

Sahaj Marg: The Sure-Fire Way of Gaining the Spiritual Goal

I start off by welcoming you all to participate in the seminar, participate not just physically or with your dollars, but with open hearts.

I have been a little concerned about the way this Mission is going in the United States. It seems to have sort of got bogged down, mired down, and one of my main concerns is that it is not serving the local native American population as it should. I have been voicing this concern for many years, and people have attributed it to so many factors, social and this and that. But I believe there is something basic, more basic to it than just Indian food, and Indian customs, and Indian methods of socialization. I don't think we people, whether we are black or white or brown or gray or blue, are so easily affected by just the taste of the food or the taste buds on our tongues.

There is something that we are lacking in offering to the local people, the American population, for whose

sake the Mission exists here. Of course, it exists to serve the Indians, too, but it is not an Indian Mission. But, it is a Mission which was started in India. Its guru is not an Indian guru, he happens to have been born in India, and therefore he is an Indian. And the system is not an Indian system, though it is based on the ancient yogic systems. These are accidents of birth, nationality and geography. You know like Christ is not only for Jerusalem, and Mohammad, may his name be blessed, is not only for Saudi Arabia or Jeddah or wherever. They are all personalities recognized as universal, whose philosophies, whose teachings are for all mankind, for those who are willing to accept them, as is the case with the Buddha, too, so also with my Master.

So, I would like the Mission to shed its Indian-ness and stick to its uniqueness, which is its method of making available a spiritual system which is easy to practise, which is effective in its working and operation and which, if practised diligently with devotion and dedication is a sure-fire method of gaining your goal, the spiritual goal.

So I would like all of you to give thought to all these things – how to shed its Indian-ness without making it American or Mexican or what have you, you see. The United States of America is famous for its Taco Bells, and Pizza Huts and what not, you see, separatists tendencies where food is and gastronomy is concerned. But that should not apply to spirituality.

I would after this meditation request all of you, I mean during the meditation, keep this question in mind, how to make this system effective for all, acceptable by all, without any prejudice as we say of colour, caste, race, creed, sex, et cetera. They should not remain

Sahaj Marg: The Sure-Fire Way of Gaining the Spiritual Goal

merely manifestos as in a political organization but real, sure-fire methods of human integration. Please give some thought to this and feel free to write to me, confidentially, in sealed envelopes, what you think the Mission should be doing, how it should be going about its work, any changes you think you should propose in the hierarchy of management. Absolutely free and fair and frank. I would appreciate it and I assure you that it will be confidential, with me only.

So for the moment this is all I have to say. I hope you will respond with as much frankness and concern for the Mission as I am expressing myself. Thank you.

The Warmth of Love Integrates Humanity

I don't know how many of you there are. I see a lot of you but, as usual, I wish there were more. You know, we are always asking for more and more. And Babuji once said that is a natural human tendency, because somebody asked him, "Why do you want more abhyasis?" He said, "I come from Infinity and therefore I want Infinity." And as we have been discussing in Detroit, and again in Dayton, it is time that the Mission spread its wings in the U.S. to serve more and more people of this country. Not to distinguish between Indians and Americans and things like that, but more and more. And naturally, when we are in America, the majority population is American, and we should be able to serve them better and better.

We always, we Indians, like everybody to change. Of course, Babuji wants everybody to change, but Indians seem to want Europeans and Americans to become more Indian in their outlook, which is not what Babuji

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The Warmth of Love Integrates Humanity

meant. Babuji meant inner change, change in character, but not change in the colour of the skin, and the height of the body, and the way of speaking English which is peculiarly American. And we Indians should therefore develop the ability to change ourselves, too. Not lose your Indianisms, not lose your culture, but accept the fact that this world is full of cultures, and traditions and languages – all of them beautiful, all of them very human. As we say in India, the blood that flows through our veins is all the same. Our loves, our hates – they are all the same. Our aspirations – they are universal; our needs basically are the same.

So this sameness that is human should be emphasized. The cultures that we bring to this world from our various nationalities, regions, geographies are worth preserving – not flaunting, *preserving*. And it is good to shed this ego and arrogance about what we call our own culture. There is no such thing as our own culture. You can have a bunch of roses, but you can also have a bunch of flowers all different, and it looks more beautiful. Beauty comes from variety. There is the individual beauty; there is the beauty of variety, variegated beauties. All nature is beautiful, deserts are beautiful.

You know, there are places in Rajasthan to which overseas people flock in winter, to live in tents in the desert to see the night sky. It's something different. You can pluck the stars out of the heavens as it were. You reach out and the star is there. You never see such skies anywhere else. The sand dunes – they have their own beauty. When the wind blows, and blows away the sand in, like, wisps of smoke – that has its own beauty. Deserts are beautiful, farmlands are beautiful,

mountains are beautiful, forests are beautiful, lakes are beautiful. You cannot say, "I like only lakes and the broad lands of the Midwest." Why not the mountains? When I go to India, I go to the Himalayas, and they are lovely. I mean, they are beyond description, but so is my beach in Madras. I mean, nothing can hold a candle to my beach. It is mine, therefore it is beautiful. Like my child is beautiful, my abhyasis are beautiful, my people are beautiful, my world is beautiful.

So I want you people to develop this idea that all that is mine is God-given. And when we say *mine* it is each one of ours, it's not only mine exclusively. It is mine because it's ours.

So this tendency to be individual in a community where we share values, where we cherish the same values, where we have the same aspirations, the same goal, that is what should weld us into a strong unified community which can grow. After all, when you want to create a ripple in a pond, a tiny pebble is enough. You don't have to throw a rock. A tiny pebble – and that pebble drops and the rings of splendour spread outwards. That is natural. The pebble doesn't do it. It creates the first stir, as Babuji said – the *kshobb*. And that does, eventually, the spreading. Each one of you should be able to drop a pebble in this ocean of humanity, and create what? These tiny wavelets in circles, which will spread to infinity. We don't have to make big efforts, we don't have to run marathons. We don't have to feed the multitude with two loaves and five fishes. Each one of us in our own humility, in our own humble approach, loving approach, has to put a small part of ourselves into this ocean of humanity and create that wave which will go on and on forever, because the ocean is limitless.

The Warmth of Love Integrates Humanity

This is what I would like all of you to participate in, to work with your heart.

Don't be afraid of giving! He who gives, receives. Jesus says, "He that shall preserve his life shall lose it, and he that shall lose it, shall gain it." We have to lose. What have we to lose? First our egos – our aloneness, our uniqueness. Because when we are in the Brighter World, there will be no separateness; there will still be the identity of the Master, the Grand-Master, yourself. Hopefully, we will all meet there one blessed day. We will still be individuals retaining our identities, but we shall not be separate from each other. You see, individuality does not mean separateness. Being an Indian must not mean isolation from the American environment, which is a beautiful environment. As we have our deficiencies, our lacks, our customs which are antiquated, our superstitions, our beliefs which should be thrown away, they have theirs, too, and so have every race in this world, every community in this world.

What brings us together must be our sameness, our oneness, our commonness. And all that distinguishes us, separates us, must be put away. God created us in various colours, various shapes, various sizes. That we cannot change. But, God did not create Hindus and Muslims and Christians and Buddhists. God did not create culture and language – these are ours.

If you read about the Tower of Babel in the Bible, you know what happened – chaos, destruction. Each race, each community, flaunting its own language, its own uniqueness. You go to India and you find different states: Tamil, Telugu, Kannada being just three in the South, and Malayalam. You go to Andhra Pradesh, there are divisions there: the Khammas, the Reddys,

the Naidus, the Brahmins, isn't it? And you go into the Khamma region, there are differences there again. So if you want to differentiate, it means you are slicing up into smaller and smaller bits and claiming that you are unique. Otherwise, why should an Indian, when he is an Indian here, not be an Indian when he goes back to India? There you become Telugus and Tamils and Hindi-speaking; and in Hindi-speaking, you have the Thakurs and the Brahmins and the Patels, you know, everything divisive.

Sahaj Marg is trying to dissolve these barriers, not break them down, but dissolve them. Dissolve them with what? With the warmth of love. You know, warmth always dissolves. If you want to melt ice, you don't freeze it, you make it warm. Hold it in your hand. Every child knows that when you hold an ice cream cone, it starts to drip. Your human warmth is melting it. And that's why they lick away frantically before it melts. Why can't we give this warmth and melt off all these barriers which are our creations?

So the theme of my visit to the United States this year, and to Europe where I started giving this message, is of unification. I told Europeans that money and commercial interests, economic values have brought you together – one euro. But Europeans are still very isolated: the French are still French, the Germans are still German. And they have guarded their frontiers which don't seem to exist anymore, because there are no frontiers when you travel on the roads; the borders have been dissolved. But in your mind they are still there – the borders, the frontiers. And you go to France, of course, there are still the Gascoigne's and the southern French and the eastern French, and the western French.

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You go to Switzerland, which is a tiny thing, I mean, you can cover it practically with a handkerchief, and there you have the Italian-speaking Swiss, the German-speaking Swiss, the French-speaking Swiss.

So you see, divisiveness can be carried on infinitely. Integration in one stroke. Human beings are human beings. Overnight, we can become citizens of this world without any barriers of nationality, geography, politics. Language is beautiful, linguistic variation is wonderful provided we don't use it to separate ourselves. Differences in music, whether it is classical or otherwise, various systems starting from Japan to China to India to the Muslim world, to the European world, and to your own blues, or whatever you call them here, jazz – they are all beautiful. If they are expressed in individual beauty to form a cluster like a flower bunch, it's wonderful. But if you want to use it as a separating device to be isolated, it is wrong. It will not be tolerated by Nature.

Destruction comes when we are anti-God. What God made one, we want to separate. God made one world, we have, I don't know, one hundred and forty-eight nations. In each nation, we have so many states, counties, what have you. For governing, it may be necessary, like I wear shoes on my feet, and gloves on my hands. It is significant that in German language, gloves are called *handschuh*, shoes for the hand. What are shoes and gloves? I mean, you have five fingers, you have five toes. The shape is different.

So let us forget all these divisions. Let us forget our *sambhar* and our *avakkai* and our *gongura* chutneys. Let us eat food: wholesome, prepared with love, which can be shared by all. If there is something which will not

make it acceptable to somebody else, like chillies in Andhra food, or like *gud* [jaggery] in Gujarati food (*gud* means not G-O-O-D, the other variety of sugar), let us eschew them.

What separates us we must throw off as not good for humanity. It may be good for me, but for us it is not good. So let us adopt that which is good for us, that which will make us grow bigger and bigger. And bring Sahaj Marg into a bigger and bigger body of, what should I say, people, nations, the world itself. And this sort of approach, I tell you, has been blessed from time immemorial, is being blessed and will always continue to be blessed. Thank you.

Practise and Stop Preaching

For you all, discipline means coming before time, for me it means waiting for you. I mean, that is one of the invertendo principles of Sahaj Marg. Like a mother waits for her children to eat, I have to wait for you all to come and receive what you have to receive. I remember in the Mahabharat serial, when they are all in the jungle, the five brothers and their mother, Kunti, this young fellow, Bhima, is always hungry. And he is the first one to come and pester his mother saying, "Mummy, mummy, I want my lunch." And she says, "Bhima, you are always hungry. And if I start serving you, you will eat up all the food that I have prepared for all of you."

Babuji used to say, "I am waiting for one abhyasi like that who will come and take away everything from me." So, may I say, I am also waiting for an abhyasi who will come and, to use the words of Babuji Maharaj, "Loot me." The early bird does not catch the worm, he takes away the granary!

I think a sign of seriousness of purpose, a sign of spiritual longing, of aspiration, is to not miss the bus.

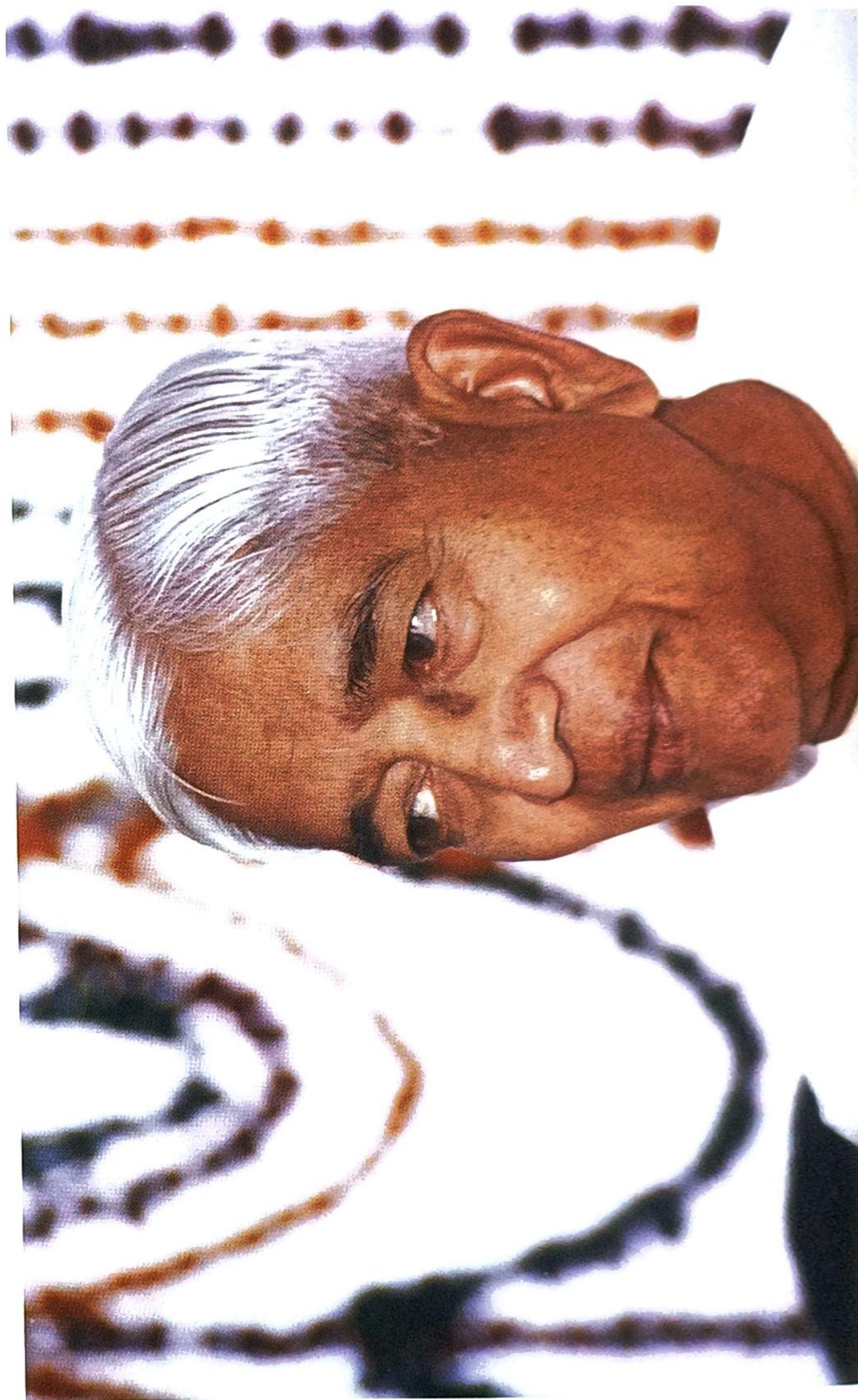
Babuji always used to bewail the fact that people go and stand in line for a cinema ticket half an hour before the show, just to see some stupid things happening on the screen, all of which is illusion. Today's civilisation panders to such illusory goals. Today's security requirements for aircraft, aeroplane flights, we have to be there two hours before flight. You have to take off your shoes, you take it off; you go behind a screen and undress – if he asks you to, you do it. I mean, otherwise you don't get on the aircraft.

But in spirituality we are treated, what shall we say, with gentle gloves of kidskin. We are pampered, we are treated like royalty. In my Master's days, when I was new in this Mission, we slept on cold stone floors in the winter, with the temperature just above zero or at zero, with the hay spread on the floor for warmth, and that cost a lot of money – my Master was not able to afford it, even that.

Today, we are put up in comfort with wooden floors, heated, carpeted, air-conditioned rooms, all of which I think promote in us, if not a disinterest in spirituality, at least a sense of, shall we say, degrading the interest in spiritual life. Because the temptations of the material life, its luxury, its glamour, are so much. I don't think any of you bathe in cold water here in the U.S. I don't hear even one protest! It's good to bathe in cold water at least in summer, because it keeps you in touch with... you see it's all right to talk of Babuji saying, "Be in tune with nature, be simple and in tune with nature." And we think wearing a \$100 tee-shirt is simple, because there are tee-shirts for \$400 which we didn't buy. Wearing a pair of shoes for \$250 is cheap because, simple, because



SRI RAM CHANDER MISSION
"YOGASHRAM"
DEHRADUN
FOUNDATION STONE
LAID ON
WEDNESDAY THE 19TH DAY OF
NOVEMBER 2003
BY
RAJAGOPALACHARI
PRESIDENT



Practise and Stop Preaching

there are alligator skin shoes for \$2500. "But, Chari, mine only cost \$70."

So you see, we are always comparing ourselves with what we could have done rather than with what we should have done; and beguiling ourselves, deluding ourselves, into a sense that we are leading simple, humble lives. We run around or drive around crazily in \$60,000 cars three-quarters simple, three-quarters because in the next lane there is a red Ferrari which costs a quarter million. And we say with a plaintive voice and a look of longing, "I wish I could afford it." There goes simplicity at two hundred miles per hour!

So you see, when we preach, we must practise. I remember a young man who came to give me some service two days back and he gave me some advice about how to look after myself. And he said, "Well, I guess I preach more than I practise myself." So the first principle of Sahaj Marg should be to practise and stop preaching.

One problem with the growth of our Mission, as far as I can see here, has been that our prefects preach more than they practise themselves. And they preach loudly and vociferously and repeatedly because their conscience pricks, their inner voice says, "Hey guy, you are not doing this." So we preach it all the more louder so that by default, as we say in computer language, if not I, my brother would have done it. So we can always go to the Master in the brighter world and say, "Babuji, I was not able to do it myself, but these seventeen guys whom I have brought with me, they did it. Isn't it better that I should make seventeen people do it, rather than I should do it and not have anybody else do it?" This seems to be the sort of argument with which we beguile

ourselves, with which we still our already still voice of the conscience, and fool ourselves into thinking that we are good guys.

So let us please get on with the job of practising Sahaj Marg, remembering that what you do, what you speak, what you practise, makes of you an example for Sahaj Marg – rather than all the teachings and the books of what you are going to do, to spout yourself from one tenth digested material. Few of you really know what Sahaj Marg is, what it is all about, what the brighter world is. The brighter world to us seems to imply some sort of a fantastic world somewhere in the best part of California, with scenics, splendid shopping malls of the latest design, everything cheap so that we can afford it, the best food, no noise, stillness. We have created a sort of a brighter world of our own desires, like the heavens of religion offer us temptation, each one with a heaven of its own variety. The Hindu heaven is understandably a place where you can be lazy, hang around doing nothing, and occasionally glance at somebody who is seated on a high chair who is supposed to be your guru or god – that's it. Another religion talks of rivers of wine, houris, et cetera.

So we should not degrade Sahaj Marg into a sort of institution, where we are guided by temptation and fear. Fear of this world and temptation for the brighter world, with a heaven structured, each one according to his own imaginary longings for desires to be fulfilled there if not here. This is a big danger, and this is what is impeding the growth of the Mission, this is what is impeding people from coming into the Mission, because when you say "Hey, the brighter world – you do nothing." And he says, "Well, if I have to do nothing,

Practise and Stop Preaching

well I have it in my own religion. My religion offers me the same sort of heaven already. What's so wonderful about your brighter world?"

Many of us are held back by the fear, as I was at one time, and that fear is no more a fear but a certainty, that if and when I do get into the Brighter World my Master will have a new assignment for me. It's like James Bond, you know, he comes back with his life intact, and with Q with a frown on his face because all his inventions have been destroyed, and there's Mr. M waiting with tickets for Venice or St. Petersburg or wherever. He says "James, you have a three week vacation. You can have it at the end of this assignment." So there goes the brighter world. I assure you the brighter world will not be what you think it is going to be – either way. And the best way of finding out is to get there first. And the only way of getting there is to do what you have to do right here and now, faithfully, sedulously, day after day, practise Sahaj Marg as it is meant to be practised. Stop preaching, get on with the job. And that reminds me that it is now ten o'clock and we must meditate.

Please start meditation.

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We Create the Potential in Ourselves

PR: May I say something?

Q: Please do, Master, please do.

PR: I'm trying to spread the butter thin. I announced something about a book this morning. I had, during the morning meditation, a new thought given to me – no doubt by Babuji Maharaj – that instead of a starting bid at \$10,003, I will invite all of you to participate with a minimum cheque of \$500 in the name of Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. And I need at least twenty-one donors so that I get that money: \$10,500. The highest donor will get the book and the Foundation retains all the cheques. Do you like it? Thank you for your enthusiastic applause. You know with every cheque I need a form to support it. So forms will be available with brother Ajay Bhattar. You may pick it up just

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after the satsangh; and come back with your cheques tomorrow morning. The highest cheque will get the book autographed by me. The minimum must be \$500. Thank you very much.

Apropos of what I said this morning, we are always talking about discipline without understanding the basic feature of discipline in Sahaj Marg – that it must come from inside. Sahaj Marg is a unique system in that there is no law enforcement agency here, as you have been repeatedly told when we are speaking about the Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg. There are no do's and don'ts. Most religious prescriptions are well known for 'don't do this,' 'thou shalt not do that' – all the negatives. Here there are only positives. Get up at dawn, do your meditation, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera – all positives. And it is left to the individual to start with whatever level of discipline we can bring into this system. Naturally, you know.

Babuji made a very profound statement which affected me for a long time. It was about a prayer he made to Lalaji saying that, "May my beginning be like mine and my ending like yours." So I thought, what is this so wonderful prayer? Because we have always to begin from where we are. I cannot begin from where you are and end like where you are. It's obviously a little clumsy. But the profoundness comes in in this humility that "Wherever I am, Lord, accept me as I am here and now." This is my level of – I won't say evolution, because most of us are not evolved at all. We have just come into this world and we have grown, not evolved. Evolution has a different meaning from growing. Becoming richer and richer is not evolution; becoming more and more intelligent is not evolution; putting

on weight is not evolution. Becoming more and more beautiful is not evolution. That is horizontal growth, as they say in the corporate world, you see.

So this humble attitude that "I am what I am, but may I become what you are," addressed to the great Master, you see. So there is no stigma in being what we are when we come into this Mission, not at all, because that is what we have to be, that is what we can be. But, that is not what we must be after some time. Otherwise it will be like one of the Indian trains, starting at Madras Central and after six hours it is still there. You know India is famous for its trains. I was very proud to see a BBC feature on the Indian railway system. Wonderful! But that is what India is. But, strangely enough, it seems in the spiritual arena there is something in the, shall we say, the Indian spiritual genius that makes the Indian seek spirituality. Not just be pushed into it by a friend or, you know, pushed into it or shoved into it as you would like to say by circumstances of despair, ill-health, but actually to seek it while we are well.

The famous statement by Kabir who said, everybody who is in need, prays. When they are sick, they pray. Every Indian knows this...nobody does it when they are happy, healthy, and wise. Should they do it when they are healthy, happy and wise, why should there be misery at all in this world? That's what Kabir asks, you see...very profound question. Something which should inspire us to say, that when I am healthy is the time to remain healthy, and stay healthy. Not try to become healthy when I am sick. This is what preventive medicine is all about. We don't go to the doctor only when we are sick, but we take care of ourselves. I know some of my abhyasis who are so careful about dental floss

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that they have wires and needles and I don't know what all, automatic things, battery-run things, twenty-five minutes after dinner every night for dental care. But, you repeat the same care for your soul in the morning for half an hour and nobody seems to be interested in it.

But, please be assured that if you are able to do it when you are healthy, happy and wise, you will remain healthy, happy and wise; become healthier, happier and wiser. And eventually end up a saint who may not be healthy, who may not be happy, who may not even be wise – but he will be a saint. So the time to do it is like anything else – like jogging, we jog at age sixteen. I saw a girl when we were coming, she was jogging at four o'clock in the evening and at a crossing there was a red light and she was moving all the time. Like some of these race horses before the start of a race, prancing around. That few seconds of stop of motion would impede the jogging.

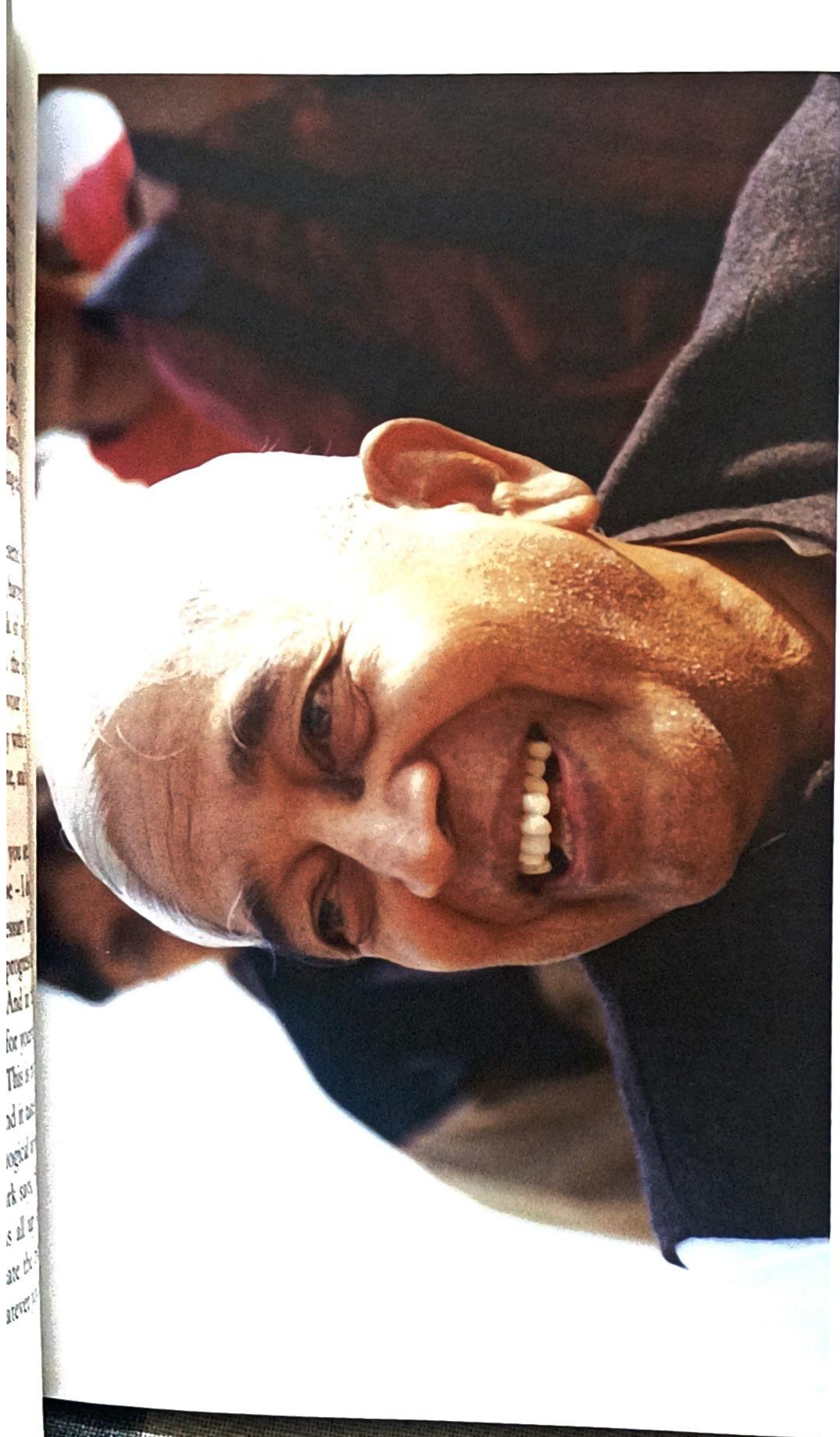
So please remember that we are accepted as we are, that is the greatness of the system – it does not say fulfilling requirements for entrants. We have no such thing. All are welcome. But we do hope that when we arrive at the exit gate of life, all of us will be able to walk through into that region of splendour, which Babuji Maharaj called the Brighter World, about which I referred to this morning. Unfortunately, like I cannot show you America without your visiting America, I cannot also show you the Brighter World unless you are there yourself. It's all right to talk of videos, et cetera. No video of anything can show you the reality as you will see it when you are there yourself.

I've often referred to this very enticing big, what shall I call it, poster in travel agencies: *Visit Tabiti*. There

is a single palm tree, there is a blue ocean, and there's a beautiful girl in one of these leis, languidly leaning against it, and every visitor to that place thinks there's one waiting for him when he goes to Tahiti. Reality is not like that. Reality – you create what is going to wait for you there. And if your spiritual enterprise, if your spiritual endeavour, if the efforts that you have made here are satisfactory, you are sure that who will wait for you there is the Master himself – none else. And if, as we all claim to do, we love the great Master, that should more than compensate us for anything else that we want in this world.

We are always talking of feeling the presence of the Master, having seen the Master in a vision, having smelt Babuji's hookah. So why should we think of meeting something else or anyone else there in the Brighter World other than him? All this endeavour of ours, whatever we are called to do here, is only with that one intention of meeting him at the exit gate, and he says, "Welcome, my son."

So that is what I wanted to clarify, you see, before we start the meditation. And I do hope – I don't pray for spiritual progress - prayer is necessary for things other than spiritual progress. Spiritual progress depends on me, right now, here, for myself. And in the same way it depends on each one of you for yourself. Here the system works, the Master helps. This is not like an elevator where you just stand still and it takes you up. Or, it is not like that famous technological wonder that I would wish for where Captain Kirk says, "Beam me up!" I wish Babuji would beam us all up sometime. But it's not like that. Here we create the potential in ourselves and transform it into, whatever you call it, the



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We Create the Potential in Ourselves

kinetic force, which will propel me there; and there he waits and says, "Good, you're back."

Thank you very much.

I Only do My Work

Many years back in Molena, brother William Waycott gave a lecture and then said, "I request the President,"...he was a bit familiar...he said, "This fellow who comes shopping in a suit and comes to the General Assembly in jeans! I request him to deliver his address." So I went up and stood at the microphone and said, "P. Rajagopalachari, Gayathri, 19 North Street, Sri Ram Nagar, Madras 600 018." I wonder if he remembers it. So today Diana said, "A few words," so I said "a few words." Now, what do you want to hear?

Generally, people are afraid when I speak, because I rarely have anything good to say either about myself, naturally, or about all of you, you see. But I must say that I am happy to see all of you. I really didn't expect to come back to the USA again, because I was pretty depressed about the general situation. Not of the economy, not of the politics, not of the country, but of the abhyasis of the Mission. Things didn't seem to be going in the right direction. I didn't find much enthusiasm for spirituality. I didn't find much craving

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for progress, if at all any. It had become something of a routine, you know, like everything else in life, including marriage. After some days, it's a routine. It loses...everything seems to lose its lustre, its freshness, its growth orientation, and we sink into some sort of lethargic continuity of existence. We don't really live. We proceed like a corpse floating on a river. You cannot say it's even floating on a river; it's the river which is doing the floating.

So I said, "What the hell, I mean, if that is it – that is it." And my going or not going, either way, isn't going to make much difference. I am, they are, and well, He is and He will continue to be. And we will go our respective ways, hoping desperately for some sort of liberation, from what we don't know – talking of the Brighter World about which we know even less and continuing, as I said, to exist in some sort of lethargic semi-coma. So, you see, it was a pretty depressing scene. That was one reason why I wasn't travelling abroad for the last three years out of India. In India of course, there is...I suppose it's an accident of history...the benevolence of Nature – and maybe the very special grace of my Master's – that India continues to have an ignorant people, a superstitious, ridiculously lazy set of people who nevertheless want to go on a spiritual enterprise. I'm not suggesting that we have to be lazy and ridiculously stupid and superstitious to be spiritual, but that is how it is. Given all these, what I would call impediments, the people of India yet come to spirituality.

So, like my old job in my company where I was a marketing man – I had good markets, bad markets and markets which were okay. And my time was to be divided

between them. And the temptation was always to go to the good market first, to the not so good markets next and then finally, reluctantly, with great trepidation, venture into those markets which were never mine. But then, marketing management dictates that you should give more time to those markets which are not so profitable or productive, and not just go to the markets which are yielding money. So it's always a question of balancing your time and your energy between the three sets of markets. Reluctantly, to those which are useless as we think; happily, to those which we think are productive and yield; and routinely, to those which are okay.

So I have been concentrating on India for the last three years, and I am very happy to say that, if you think in terms of statistics, probably we've had three hundred percent growth in the last three years in India. We've had so many new ashrams coming up; big ashrams coming up; housing projects coming up; abhyasis coming in droves, you know, as if it's a wild herd of bison coming out of a burning forest. And it is good. But then, I won't say my conscience was pricking, because I don't have a conscience at all – it's a question of work. I don't judge myself, I only do my work and leave the result to Him.

So I thought, how about it! Though I'm old, feeble, not inclined to travel, getting crusty, getting testy as old people are expected to be – now even shopping has lost its glamour. I find I have more money to spend and less things to buy than the other time – it was the invertendo. I had more things to buy and less money to buy them with, and now it is the other way round. Yet, you see, with all these things, I have ventured out, like

I Only do My Work

an old lion coming out of its cage, blinking its eyes in the sunshine to which it has not been used. And here I am. And may I say I'm happy I came, because perhaps like all old men I have been a little pessimistic, a little depressed – more because of my own self than because of all of you, which is good.

I hope, if there is a next time, I will see more and more of you, more and more enthusiasm. I'm really happy to see more native Americans this time in the Mission than I have ever seen before. It is no doubt the good work of the prefects and the organisation, but I think it is also the work of my Master that the seeding he did way back in 1972, when we first came to these shores, is beginning to take effect. And the local vegetation, if you will – human population if you want to look at it that way – is beginning to respond, and more and more are coming into the Mission.

I hope it will continue to be that way, because one day I want to see an enormous audience of Americans here. I don't want to see less of Indians; I want to see more of Americans. More and more Indians; much more and more of Americans, and these halls should become too small for us. We should see them in the hundreds of thousands, not for my sake, but for the sake of your people here, because there are indications that America, notwithstanding all the indications to the contrary, will bloom spiritually. I hope, like the sleeping giants of our fables, it's a late riser, but when it rises it will overshadow the world, and not with its might, but with its wisdom, with its awakened soul, and with a new spiritual life that it will offer to the rest of this globe of ours.

This is my prayer, and I think America will respond, and my Master will bless it. Thank you.

The Divine Touch

I have something more to add today. I have been hoping that people will ask questions, but.... Sahaj Marg says that only in life we can work off our samskaras. Nobody asks, "Why am I reborn?" OK, we have samskaras, but why should I be reborn? That leads us to the question, why does life end at all? Existence is eternal. Life is different. Life is when we exist in a body. So soul does not live, soul exists. It is eternal, it exists. Existence is always eternal. Life begins and ends when we are in a body. We come here because of grossness. When the grossness is totally removed either by cleaning or by what we call *bhog* that is undergoing the effects of samskaras, off we go back into existence. Therefore, as I said, existence, consciousness, bliss.

Now the outer world, external world, operates on samskaras through our senses and makes us undergo the effect of those samskaras, either as pleasure or pain, suffering, whatever you call it, you know, enjoyment. They are two sides of the coin, incidentally. You can't have one without the other, Much as you would like to have one and not the other.

The Divine Touch

Now, why should we meditate if our divine nature is to manifest? I believe that only through meditation and receiving sittings something is initiated in the soul. Like the external world acts upon our samskaras to release them, like a seed has to be put into the ground to sprout, this nature of ours cannot manifest without meditation. So the first sitting that we receive starts off this process of manifestation, shall we say, like visualising a concept in some terms, or like opening a file in computer terminology. Till then it is dormant. So, that dormant nature has to be awakened. And, therefore, you find terms like 'the sleeper awakes', used even in occult literature. That is why the divine touch, as we call it, is necessary. The divine touch is nothing but the transmission.

Of course, in our mythology we have stories where the divine touch of even a stone released the life in it. A lady called Ahilya who was cursed to be a stone; the divine touch of Lord Rama released the life. That touch releases or removes all the samskaras, you see, like when you touch a sleeper, he wakes.

So either that way, or through our *bhoga* we have to get rid of all these things that we have. Because it is vital to understand why we should meditate, why life should not do what it does with the samskaras, with our nature also. As I said yesterday, we don't choose to be evil or corrupt or violent or vicious. We are compelled to be. We know that even murderers weep after committing a murder – remorse. Remorse is nothing but a feeling that why did I do this? Why did this happen to me?

So, you see, under the force of circumstances, under uncontrollable impulses, when the divine nature is truly, truly, at its basal dormancy – dormant incidentally is

nothing but sleep – like when somebody is very deeply asleep, you have to shake him awake. These things happen because the samskara is too strong. There is always regret. People who enjoy two pizzas when they should have been happy with one slice, regret. People who smoke too much, regret. People who have spent too much money, regret. And when the regret is too strong, it becomes guilt.

Guilt is followed by what psychologists call repression, and the samskara becomes more and more hard, the spiritual process even to undertake it becomes very difficult. We reject it. I mean there is so much psychology involved in these explanations: that the ego is very strong, the ego cannot survive without samskaras, and the ego likes to survive, it doesn't care about the soul, and so on and so forth. We need not go into all that, they are in the books.

So I just wanted to conclude this unfolding of ideas with this specific statement that without meditation, without the transmission, we will continue as we are. The external world is enough to work on our samskaras. It *will not* work on our dormant nature which has to be specifically awakened by a different impulse, which is transmission. Thank you.

Faith and Wisdom

You know, I was very impressed with Bilbo Baggins – you must all have seen Lord of the Rings – where in his 111th birthday party, when he stands up to give a speech. I always wish I could say something like what he said – which leaves the people, you know, wondering what on earth he did say. Because I think he said, “I like half of you as much as you like me, and the other half I like even less.” (Laughter) Something like that you know. Not derogatory, not publicly offensive but which makes people wonder what on earth he did say. Well I wanted to give a talk this evening, but I was a bit, you know, off colour. I had actually had some fever this afternoon and I was in bed, but I decided to give the sitting. That is both a pleasure and a duty, so I always do it.

You know, I’ve been asking for suggestions about what we should do to bring more and more Americans into the mission. It was more of a bit of kite flying, you know. I wanted to see the reaction of people to it. Not that I needed really any advice, or because advice doesn’t

work in these situations. And I have a lot of response. But I am somewhat disappointed with the responses because they are either cultural or purely gastronomic, you know. And it made me wonder, have we changed at all in the century since Swami Vivekananda said that in India religion has gone into the kitchens. I hope you understand what he meant – that there is more sanctity associated with the preparation of food, how pure it is, whether you had your bath before you went into the kitchen, et cetera, et cetera – and of course, what he said was true then, it is true today too. We are still, you know, worried about our food and its purity – I'm not talking of the biological purity of the stuff that we eat so that we don't get sick, but the so-called spiritual purity.

Babuji taught us a way of making everything palatable and good for us spiritually. He said, "Before you eat, meditate for a moment, and offer it to your Master." I don't see anybody doing it. Not one. Sometimes, when I'm at the table and there are some of these oldies from the mission, I think they want to teach me a lesson so they close their eyes and pretend to offer it to the Master, and I have a laugh – I laugh up my sleeve, you see. I say, "These guys want to impress me." And if they were really oldies, and my seniors, and so profoundly advanced in spirituality they shouldn't have to impress me, I should have to impress them. Isn't it? So just try that. Even if it's just a sandwich, or a cookie, as you say in America for a biscuit. Just close your eyes for a moment and think the Great Master is eating it. And you'll find it becomes like nectar. It's no more Indian food; it's no more American food. It's not even food, it is nectar. And nectar belongs to all, you know. There

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is no Christian nectar, and Hindu nectar, and Muslim nectar, and Buddhist nectar. Nectar is of the gods. So let us try these things in our assemblies. Let us not try artificially to make everybody our brothers and sisters, let us feel it in our hearts. We cannot go around and say, "Hey you, you are my brother, come here," you know. It automatically separates you.

So these are some things I would have spoken a little more elaborately on in the evening, but as I said, I was too tired and a bit sick too. And I think my Master always gives me the right opportunity, you see, like this opportunity has come up by itself. It was not of my making, I don't think you wanted it, but it happens. As we say, here is the paper and here is the fire and it is burnt. Or here is the lover and here is the beloved and viola! as the French say – it happens. So we should let things happen. The great problem with modern education is that we want to make things happen. Divine wisdom says, you wait, it will happen. It must happen because it is destined to happen. And what is it that enables us to wait for it? It is nothing but faith. I have always felt that faith is the ability to wait indefinitely. You cannot look at your wristwatch and say, "Well, I'm willing to wait for five minutes, Chari – that is the limit of my faith." It's not possible. Faith means infinite patience, infinite capacity to wait. Till when? Well, you wait for a fruit to ripen on the trees, isn't it? You know, the fruit that ripens on the tree is the most delicious, whereas all the bananas that you import, the big Californian oranges, if they are ripened artificially, they don't have it. They look big, they look attractive, but the taste isn't there. So nature has its own way of ripening things. Things which grow have their own rhythm of growth.

A child must develop at its own pace. You can't say, "Oh, conception is over, now I want the delivery." This is not FedEx. No? We have to wait. "For heaven's sake, how long?" Well, till it is delivered.

You saw that movie about the FedEx plane, which crashed. And that guy was in an isolated place, all by himself. Four and a half years, and he did deliver the parcel. Well, that is, I mean, a hooray to FedEx. But the point is that even FedEx parcels can be delivered after four and a half years if nature takes a hand in between. So let us always respect nature, and say, "Nature, with your permission I'm going to deliver this tomorrow morning – overnight." Why? Because I've taken twenty-nine dollars for it. Nature will help. If you say "Hell or high weather, I'm gonna deliver this" – or know the reason why – Chari, don't be surprised if nature says, "Uh huh!" You know nature can be American, nature can be Indian, nature can be Australian, but nature is nature, "Uh huh!" So we must respect nature. Both the inner nature of people and the external nature, which is divine, and the Nature with a capital 'N,' which is God. If we learn to harmonize these three natures, *we are there*. And as long as we are fighting with the internal nature and the outside nature and praying on our knees to the capital 'N' Nature, we have three enemies.

God doesn't like to be prayed to. I mean, imagine you are parents and if your child is always coming and praying, "Daddy, give me five cents. Oh, thou art the real goal of human life, Daddy. Today all I want is a dollar." He says, "Yes, my son, take it." At age eighteen you say "Oh Dad, what a wonderful person you are. I love you Dad." And he says, "What do you want, my son?" "Only fifty dollars, Dad." "Yes, my son, take it."

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And daddy wonders when this son of mine will come to me for something other than what I can give him. When will he ever come to me and just hug me and say "Dad, I wanna be with you." So you see God has infinite patience. We only go to Him with demands, with wants, with curses, even four letter words. Blasphemous. And He suffers all. Why? Because He is infinitely patient. He has faith that eventually we stupid people will go to Him. But He is the almighty, and we are poor termites on earth, and we have no faith that He will come to us. You see what a parody we have made of life, what a tragedy we have made of life, that He has infinite patience, infinite faith, that these are my children whom I have created, and they must and will come to me, all that I have to do is to wait. And we say, "I want it now." And God says, "Why?" "Oh! Come on God, I wanted it yesterday!" That's the great American tradition. "I wanted it yesterday." And God says, "If I had given you yesterday what I have to give you today, you might not have been able to bear it."

Because, you know, things are made perfect by being heated in fire and beaten with hammers and rolled in mills and then they become perfect. Imagine a diamond. Had it not undergone the enormous temperatures and pressures associated with geological phenomena, there would be no diamond, there would only be coal. You pay \$2,999, \$9,999, \$11,999 for diamonds – it's always 999, I don't know why – and you admire that beautiful brilliant, as they call it. Imagine the pressures to which it was exposed, the temperatures to which it was exposed before mere carbon became a diamond. Still carbon, but not the same. So please submit. Submission is not, you know, to be beaten into slavery, as was infamously

done in the region where we are, the south of America. I receive letters saying "Hey, you're called a Master. I don't wanna be a slave." There's no slavery here. I mean it would be a poor Master who managed slaves, wouldn't it be? Beating them to death, trampling upon them, horse-whipping them. What sort of Master is that? What sort of a husband would he be if he had to drag his wife by her hair to bed every night? He would be ashamed of himself, isn't it? A husband, whose wife is not pining away and waiting for him in bed, is no husband. If you have to beat her, trample her, what sort of love is that? What sort of a Master is the guy who's going to chain you and drag you and put you into a cell and seal you up, and say, "Meditate, or else!" No, no, no. That sort of thing doesn't go in Sahaj Marg. Sahaj Marg is a way of freedom. You are free to go to heaven, you are free to go to the other place, or you are free to remain here, for as long as you like. It's all your choice. God says, my dear children, I have given you free will. I have given you an intellect. The intellect must help you to decide what to do, what is good for you. Your will power must enable you to do it. The rest is up to you. "No Lord, it is going to take me eternity." He says, "I can wait. Can you?"

So, that is the question that faces every spiritual aspirant, you see, that He can wait for eternity because He is the Master of eternity. We are not even master of this moment. The moment you think you've never had it so good you stumble over a stupid stone and break your leg. You are having the best holiday of your life, and a little accident, and you're in the hospital for the next three months. A drink too many, and you are in the hospital with a smashed car. A little prolonged

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honeymoon and you've lost your wife. We have no control over the next moment. Spirituality says, use this moment as if it was your last. Babuji Maharaj, when I asked him, you know, "What is wisdom?" he said, "Live as if you're going to die the next moment." Then we would do what has to be done. Not saying, "Whoa!! What's that? Bud Lite – let me have one before I go. One for the road." You wouldn't do that would you, if you knew you're going to die. So wisdom is to use moment by moment, moment by moment, because there are no such things as hours and days. You know, if you have a ladder in which every alternative step is missing, you wouldn't be able to climb it, would you? Similarly, if you have your life where every alternate hour is missing, that means you're dying and living every hour. To give continuity to time means using every moment as it comes, as it should be used. That is life. Such a life never ends, because his time never ends. And the wisdom that is given to us, if you develop it for this purpose, that is wisdom. Otherwise it is merely intellect. This world is full of intellectuals, philosophers, authors, dreamers, what have you. But of wise men, it hath few. And it's unfortunately a truth that, if you look at the wise men of all ages, I don't think any of them were educated in the sense that we understand education.

You know, you can ferment something artificially, and it can ferment by itself. Wisdom is your mind fermenting within itself naturally; intelligence is artificially doing it, like ripening the banana from South America – no taste. Such intellects have no values, no ethical values associated with them. It is like a computer – yes or no. "Should I murder this person?" "Rephrase your question." "Should I terminate?" "Yes!" Because

Terminator 1, Terminator 2, Terminator 3, you know. You don't end life, you terminate it! So, beware of intellects where there is nothing behind to back the judgement, because then you might as well feed your questions to the computer and wait for the answer.

So these are some of the thoughts that I thought I should share with you before I leave tomorrow, you see, we may not have time tomorrow morning – there's an Annual General Meeting, there are some more marriages, I believe, to be performed. And you know, the moment of departure is hardly any time for deeper values because they become emotionally coloured. Some say, "Well, for heaven's sake, he's going at last!" I don't blame them, because if I may say so, I feel that way myself. It's about time I left. You know. No, no, I mean this is a discussion between brothers and sisters. So we should not wait till the last moment to exchange, shall we say, feelings of love, thoughts of love, because after all an advice, if it is not full of love, is no advice, again it is only intellectual. It's like a smoking doctor who tells his patients don't smoke. There's no love behind it. He's killing himself and telling you, you don't kill yourself. So when you deal with love, with persons, advice is not advice, it is tenderness. It is concern. And when we speak to others with concern, concern for others, not yourself, it goes straight to their heart like an arrow. And that's where to shoot. Not to kill, but like cupid, to win another heart. So I hope, you know, Indians or Americans, white or black or yellow or blue – doesn't matter, we're all human beings. We all have the same aspirations, the same needs and the basic human need is love – to be loved and to be able to love. And let us promote that feeling in ourselves, let

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us cultivate that value in our hearts, let us cherish that feeling towards those who are – whom we are destined to be with and to serve if possible. And there's no such thing as the growth of the Mission, or growth of numbers, or anything. There's a question of how many people can we love, so that we are happy and they are happy. Thank you.

God is Everything

No official motions and voting and all that? Nothing? Oh! I'm always disappointed when there is no raising of hands (abhyasis raise hands). Okay! It's wonderful to see all that enthusiasm. Enthusiasm means to put God into you; comes from *theos*; *en-theos* – to put God into you. That's what we do here. Every transmission is putting God into your hearts, because transmission is the essence of Divinity. And when it manifests itself in our work, in the glitter in our eyes, in the tears when we part, in the longing for being reunited again – all that is an expression of the divine in us. Because there is no divinity without feeling.

The world has not taught us what love really means. Love is feeling, not emotion. Emotion is smoke. Love is feeling and that is fire. And as all fires, it must burn. It must consume us. So, a love which does not consume is not love – it's tinsel, fraud. So that is what we wish to see, you see. And when we love we want to work for them; we want to serve people whom we love, don't we? We love our children; we serve them, though not

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in the sense in which we use the word service, because today the word service means paisa, dollars, money. "I serve Microsoft" – that means I'm earning my money there, it doesn't mean anything more. And when I sell my shares and make a lot of money, I'm serving myself. That is self-service. Either you go and pick up your pizza in the restaurant, you know that's self-service too, or you punch a button and get out a bar of chocolate – self-service. Register yourself by punching a button – self-service. But the true self-service is where you serve the Self within – your essential Self. That is spiritual life.

So the three levels of work are where you serve your material self, which you have to do. You have to look after the body, you have to feed it; you have to keep it healthy so that it'll carry you through this life's voyage that you began in your mother's womb, and end up in the Brighter World. This should be our journey. Not from here to Tokyo or to Timbuktu. From the moment of conception when you are born into this material world, to the moment of liberation when you are in the Brighter World – that is the true journey of our life. That's why we say, "Thou art the real goal of human life." Our temporal goals ... today some people will go to Detroit, some will go to Dallas, some will go to San Jose. For me it will never end because I'm always going from somewhere to somewhere until it ends. So the first level of work is this work, which we do to keep ourselves happy, healthy, and hopefully, wise.

That wisdom must lead us to the second level of work – the spiritual work upon ourselves; that I must know that I'm here for a spiritual purpose, and not for a menial purpose. You know all material purposes

are menial purposes. If I work for money, I'm selling myself, and there's no use in compromising and saying, "But I need the money." That's why noble work doesn't take money in return. The true doctor doesn't demand fees; the true teacher doesn't accept fees. It used to be the tradition that the teacher taught and the students brought – you know, somebody brought some cornflakes; somebody who had cows brought some milk; somebody whose father was a millionaire brought some sugar and they all sat down and ate it together. No giving and taking – participating, partaking, and enjoying together a mutuality of existence where everybody shared, each one contributing what he could. The teacher contributing his knowledge, his wisdom and the disciples, the students, contributing what they could. First, by their presence – if there are no students, there is no teacher. Please remember you cannot be a professor without students, you cannot be a guru without disciples, and you cannot be God without devotees.

There is a philosophy, which says, "If there are no devotees, there is no God." Until human beings came on this planet, there was no God. I mean animals, and birds and beasts and insects – they don't know what God is. It's like a person who's never married saying, "I'm waiting for my wife." You can't have a wife; there are billions of women all over the world, but you have a wife only when you're married. Similarly, you have a God only when you recognise His presence in *your* life. Not as some fictitious presence somewhere in some godforsaken heaven which doesn't exist.

I don't believe that heaven is God's abode. A heaven in which I am not and in which my God is not with

God is Everything

me, is no heaven. If He is with me, this is heaven too. Therefore, I say, "All this and heaven too," because all of you are with me. I'm in heaven, and my Master is with me. Wonderful! We are all together in one divine existence, in one divine abode – which is here and now. Religion offers us fictitious goals. Where, where is heaven? 'God in heaven' – yes, but what is He doing up there? If He is in heaven He should be concerned with me, not with my mundane welfare that "Oh, today I don't have chocolates," the child says. "Today I have cornflakes but no milk," the husband says. "Today I have a wallet, but no money in it," says the man. "I have a car but no gas," says the frustrated student. That is not God's purpose. If God is with me, I have everything. If God is with me where I am, having nothing, I have everything, because God is *everything*.

This is the secret philosophy – it's supposed to be esoteric, and all this blah, blah of, you know, hidden knowledge, hidden wealth, hidden wisdom. Why hidden? Nothing is hidden. Everything is open. But we are told, "Do not see because thou shalt be blinded." Well, my eyes have not been blinded, I have seen. What blinds me is the flash of the cameras, which don't show me myself. So remember, there's no light which can blind me if it is Divine. There is no form which can frighten me if it is Divine. God is not a ghost that He will appear and I should be frightened to see Him. I will see only the beloved.

So we must learn to get out of these clutches and, what should I say, the lies that have been forced upon us through religious teachings. All religions all over the world – they are teaching us the same thing. God is not here, please pray on your knees, humble yourself. I mean

a mere father doesn't want his son coming grovelling to him on his knees and say, "Daddy, can I have a couple of bucks." He would say, "Who the hell are you! Are you my son? Come on, get up, stand up on your two damn feet, man?" Wouldn't you say it? I would not like my son grovelling before me in the dust and beating his chest, with ashes on his forehead. Would you do it? So how do you think God will like your grovelling in the dust and beating your breast, and wailing? He wants us coming erect with our head held up and saying, "I am your son. Whatever I am, I am that."

A son has this place in this home; this home is mine because it is my father's. I don't have to grovel and have doors opened to me by priests whom I have to bribe. I don't have to buy a lot in some graveyard to be buried in. What for? If I have no dignity in my soul, my body has no dignity whatsoever. It is what religion says: dust and ashes. All bodies are dust and ashes, whether it is Christian or Hindu or Muslim or Buddhist or whatever. The body has no place in our existence except as a vehicle to transport me, as I said, from conception to liberation. If it does not fulfil that purpose – like a car in which we commute everyday to Atlanta to go and earn our bread, we keep riding in it again and again, and that is the misery of life.

So let us make sure, dear sisters and brothers, and all the future of our hopes – our children – that we shall make this journey only once, and remember the old thing which I cannot quote, because I have forgotten it myself: "I shall pass this way but once. Any good that I can do, or any charity that I can bestow, or anything that I can share – let me do it now, for I may never pass this way again." Thank you.

Take the Master's Heart

I wish to reveal a secret. I often do. I'm always doing it but nobody appreciates it, because so long as you don't reveal it people want it. ...My only secret is: I never surrendered to my Master. Now as the old British would say, "Put that in your pipe and smoke it." What they mean is try to make some meaning out of it. What happened? And I tell you one hundred percent truthfully that I never surrendered to my Master. Then how did I get here?

Would you like to find out? "Yes!" [Audience] No, I mean, by yourself. I mean it's a nice adventure. It's like one of these trails where you keep leaving – what do you call them; no, no, what do the spies leave behind? Trails, clues. We can play a game of clues you know, and you go around, and hop around and find it. Yesterday ... you know I'm fond of GPS [Global Positioning System]. I saw a GPS advertisement where the GPS is programmed in such a way that you have to go treasure hunting with it. There's no treasure, but you bury something somewhere and leave a trail of

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way-points and flags and what not. And you use your GPS to figure out where it is. And when you get there, you realise you paid \$999.99 (it's amazing how we pay \$999 dollars without thinking about it and remember the ninety-nine cents that was added on to it) and you find that was a game. All life is a game like that. We pay expensive money for finding nothing at the end of it.

Sahaj Marg is such a journey. Because Babuji has said very truthfully, very honestly, very openly, very clearly, that Reality is nothing. I mean if you think of it, simplicity has nothing about it. It's simple because there's nothing to it. All the glamour and the glitter that we add to life is fooling ourselves, isn't it. We want to make things attractive, glamorous, something which we will crave, which we will covet. I mean a great deal of industries run on these human, shall we say, weaknesses: the cosmetic industry, the jewellery industry, the clothing industry, no? Fall fashions, I think fashions fall and we fall.

Well what is the secret of secrets? I took my Master hundred percent. I had no reservations. Like, you know, when Caesar fell, when he landed, and it would have been construed as a bad omen by his soldiers, but he said, "*Veni, vidi, vici.*" I came, I saw, I conquered. And he grasped a handful of that soil and said, "Hail Caesar!" or whatever he said. And the whole crowd responded, banged their hands on their chest, on their armour, and there he was – Caesar!

So the secret is, take that old guy, grab him, and hold him hard. Don't let him surrender, or let him try to get away from you. *Hold him.* It's like fishing. I mean, no fish wants to be caught – and there you are with your waders and your expensive equipment and thousand

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dollar rod and reel, and flies at the end of it. The fish doesn't care a damn for your thousand dollar rods and reels and your waders, and your expensive car in which you came driving all the way. It likes that little fish, that tidily little fish. That is the fish. And what is the fish that you have to, you know, [gestures as if dangling a bait] in front of the old guy, what is it? [Abhyasis say: "The heart."]

As Babuji said, that is all there is to it. You can do like this [makes a fist], and say, "I will not surrender." A fist. Or, "I surrender, Master. Take my heart." I didn't do any of these things. *I took his*. I think my Master was a bit, shall we say, flabbergasted that here was a guy who stole his heart without his knowing it. I'm not joking. This is a very serious talk. I try to give a few punch lines, make you laugh because otherwise you nasty little fellows, you don't accept. You say, "Oh, this is too serious, Chari. How can I go and get the Master? If I took him, what would the others do?" I mean silly things like this. You are all so kind to others without being kind to yourself – wonderful democracy, wonderful sharing. "Hey, but Chari," I can hear, you know, Dave Bolevice coming: "If I took Babuji, what would others do?" Well, try it. When you eat a sandwich you don't think of anybody else, do you? You go and grab it, hmm?

I remember I was in Cleveland, and I bought some pizza, eight or nine of them at \$12.50 each. After the sitting I had some time, I went for a walk. There was this Italian pizzeria, there was this old fat Italian lady who refused to cut it up. She said, "Eight slices." I said, "Sixteen." "I will not cut my pizza!" I said, "But my dear, it has to be cut." "I will not cut!" I said, "Okay,

compromise! How much will you cut?" "Eight! No more." I said, "Come on, be a darling – twelve!" She looked at me, you know, very suspiciously. I think the darling got her. And she did give me twelve slices per pizza. Now twelve into eight, ninety-six pieces of pizza were on the table. I had to give another sitting, because you know, clamorous group of abhyasis, and they said, "Chari, but we have time for another sitting." I said, "Okay." You know what happened? The pizzas disappeared. There was not a tiny bit of even olive left on the table. That's how you should take.

I remember once in Denmark, there was Babuji, there was myself. We had, I mean, he gave the satsangh at nine o'clock. I was giving individual sittings. At twelve o'clock somebody came – two people, and he said, "You give this sitting and I will give this sitting." And it so happened, coincidentally, accidentally, whatever it is, we both ended up at five past one; both very hungry. And just before the sitting, I had seen two huge stainless steel tureens, the beautiful Danish vessels, full of Babuji's favourite mushroom soup. So Babuji said in Hindi, "You must be hungry." I said, "Well, you remember my hunger when you are hungry." So we both had a laugh, and when we went, lunch had been finished and there was not a leaf of grass, not a drop of soup in anything. So we just grinned and went into the bedroom and prepared his hookah. I had a smoke myself, and we waited for dinner. So taking is our privilege.

When we talk of surrendering, we have all these hang-ups about slavery and Master and myself and how can I surrender; what about my entity and where the hell does it go when I surrender? Well, what happens when you surrender? You're still there, isn't it? Even

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after surrender you're very much there. Not as 'I' am there, but 'it' is there. And the 'it', He knows, what it is. But when you take, you have the pride of possession, of acquisition, and if I may say so, of having slipped a sort of pillowcase over his head while he wasn't looking, and suddenly he is there, flapping around like a caught fish, and you say, "Hey! Who is the Master, you or I?" So I suggest you people try it. And I bet, you know, the Master is also as slippery as a fish, and the bigger the fish is, the more difficult it is to catch.

I was once reading a book on fishing and a huge trout, sometimes fourteen-pounder, fifteen-pounder, you get the blighter on your fly, ... and then you have to let him run, give him the reel as they say. You don't try to pull him in; he'll break the reel and the rod. Let him run, then pull him in slowly. Let him run again, when he wants. He'll go and hide under a rock. Pull him in slowly. Again he will run. But in this running and running and running, he loses his breath. Ultimately, by four o'clock in the evening when you are dead tired and your arm is aching, and you feel why the hell did I come into this stream to fish for trout, you just wind it up and there's your nineteen-pounder. You can go home and brag, "I caught a fish that big."

It's as good as that, shall I say, proud feeling that I *did* catch the biggest fish in the ocean. This is not Hemingway's fish, which other fish stole while he was bringing it in. This is my fish, which I caught and by jove, I'm still holding on to it. Try it. I wish you all success.

Everyone Deserves to Become

My mind goes back to 1972 when I came with Babuji Maharaj to this country, USA. We landed in New York, I think at about five o'clock in the evening, and there was a car waiting to take Babuji Maharaj to Stonington in Connecticut. And that's where he began his work in this big country of the US – Stonington, Connecticut. So I am happy to be back in Connecticut after thirty-one years. [applause]

At that time the number of abhyasis were probably, of course [chuckles] Babuji Maharaj and myself [laughter] and maybe two others. The family with whom we stayed, they had heard something of Babuji Maharaj, and one of the daughters of Grace Kimball, who used to live in Cleveland, Ohio, was married to the son of the family with whom we stayed in Stonington. So that was what took us there. I remember at that time when we came here, we had probably twenty-two abhyasis in the US, and when three weeks later we left, we had about sixty-eight abhyasis. And Babuji was enormously pleased that the number of abhyasis had

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been multiplied three times. We also left some prefects behind; some of them are still around, some have disappeared.

As they say, time changes everything. Babuji always used to regret that while time changes everything – time makes black hair white, makes the young old, ripens fruit, matures wine – with human beings, it's not able to do much. There is an old saying that, "old is gold." Precisely to what it applies, I have never been able to determine. Some old things are gold. I mean, like antiques, you know, which you buy. They are gold because they are old, not because they have any intrinsic value in themselves. In America, there is a lot of at least superficial, shall we say, respect, paid to the old [chuckles] which is rather, to me who is a straight talker, a lot of spurious stuff. In the old age homes and the geriatric homes, where I have a suspicion we just put away the old people out of sight, out of mind, they are taken care of. In Eastern societies, we respect the old. We have of course, our problems with the old, I know. You know, I am old myself so I know. The young people around me have problems. They politely say, "Looking after the Master." [chuckles] Of course, you see, but I know they have their own grudges, their own problems, their own difficulties, because as we grow old we become crusty, as the old English saying goes. We become impatient.

Babuji never showed his impatience in public. But he used to be impatient in private. I had the privilege of being his only companion for months on end, and I knew him very well indeed. And all his disappointment was that his work for humanity was not accepted by us human beings, and he was repeatedly saying you can

take an animal and train it in three months. His favourite example was a lion in a circus, which you could train in such a way that it would open its mouth and allow the trainer to put his head into the mouth and not bite. But he said, "Alas! Human beings – not so easily trained," because unfortunately or fortunately, only God in His wisdom can know why He gave us our own will."

Babuji used to say, no lover would like his beloved to come by force. You cannot drag your lover by the hair as the old Neanderthal people are supposed to have done. You know I've seen cartoons of a big biceped guy with a huge, what do you call this dumbbell sort of thing on his shoulder, dragging his beloved by her hair into the cave. That sort of thing went out with the dodo. Love must come willingly. You want children to come willingly to you, not beat them around. Love must be spontaneous, love must be reciprocal, love must come and not be called. It is the beloved who longs for union, for meeting, whatever you call it. In Hindi we say *milan*.

So Babuji used to emphasise that spirituality is, above all, a love affair with the Divine. And the Divine is like one of those shy beauties, you know, longing for her beloved, but never venturing beyond her domain, not stepping out of the household. He must come. I mean, that is the law, that is the etiquette – that is the culture of love. It has no nationality. We cannot say, "Oh! But in the West, Chari, we do things differently." It is not that different. That is love; that has to be the only way it must be done. That it is done differently doesn't make it correct. So you see, this etiquette of love says, you who love me must come to me.

And I think Sahaj Marg, if you've read its literature with some perspicacity, some idea of really

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understanding how going beyond the superficialities of sitting and meditating and cleaning, and all these entirely surface things, it is the transmission of life itself. *Pranahuti* is defined as the transmission of the *prana* of the Master into the heart of the recipient, the abhyasi, the devotee, if you will. It is a life-giving force, love is a life-giving force, *prana* is a life-giving force. *Prana* is the ultimate life. The life that is transmitted when lovers come together physically is not *prana* – that is just life. So, you see, this goes beyond the physical level of loving. This is love in its absolute divine essence, poured willingly into the heart of whoever's willing to accept.

And I don't like this word deservingness. Because in some way we tend to judge ourselves and say, "Oh, I am not deserving." Culpability, guilt, false modesty, false humility. "Oh I don't deserve His grace." How do you know you don't deserve His grace? You know if you go to India, or to places where we have water problems, when there is water shortage you will find people collecting water in every conceivable vessel. It may be of tin; it may be of brass, copper, gold, what you will. The vessel does not make any difference; it is the water that is important. And what is it that the vessel must have to be deserving? It must be empty. Suppose a bucket says, "No, no, I am only a galvanized sheet; I am unfit to store water in." Well, we store it in mud pots, don't we?

So don't think of yourself as being deserving or undeserving. If you think you are deserving, you might be fooling yourself. If you think you are undeserving, you might be condemning yourself. Both are not relevant to spiritual life. In spiritual life all that is relevant, all that is

necessary, is for you to present yourself and say, "Hey! I'm here. Fill me." I mean, it's a foolish car owner, who would have a full tank and go to the petrol pump and fill gas in it, wouldn't he be? You empty your tank – when it's empty, you go and fill up.

So all this ... you know, many of these concepts in Sahaj Marg have been superficially bandied about, and superficially dealt with, intellectually analysed. "Am I deserving?" How do you know what makes you deserving or what doesn't make you deserving? I mean the spiritual histories of this world are full of saints who were sinners. Few were born saints, that is the very odd, very, shall we say, minuscule proportion of the saintly culture who became saints, who were born saints, you know. But if you look into the history of individual saints, most of them were ordinary human beings with their quota of, shall we say, a rambunctious life, enjoyment, pleasure. Even the great St. Augustine, if you read his confessions – he was a downright liar, womaniser, what have you, until the age of nineteen or twenty. It is in his confessions! I am not criticising St. Augustine. He has criticised himself. And he became a saint – one of the greatest in the Christian tradition. Isn't it?

So let us not be worried whether we are sinners, or murderers, or rapists, or what have you. That is the base of human culture. Remember that in every candle, the light is at the top and the base is wax. In every lamp, the light is there [points upwards]; the bottom may be copper, wood, tin, brass, metal, anything you like. It is the light that matters. So neither exclude yourself by thinking that you are too deserving and Sahaj Marg is not good enough for you, nor condemn yourself by

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thinking, "I am a sinner, I am a sinner; *mea culpa, mea culpa*," you know in the old tradition. There is no *mea culpa* here. As Jesus told the people who wanted to stone the adulteress, "Let him cast the first stone who has not sinned." And nobody dared to pick up a stone.

We must read and understand the lives of saints. What they were, what they became. It is in the *becoming* that the job is, not in the *being*, you see. I mean a king who is born a king has nothing to speak about. And generally they were stupid. They did not know how to rule. They ruined their kingdoms. They fought unnecessary wars. And their people were miserable.

Do we deserve to become? Of course. Everyone deserves to become. How do you become deserving? By trying to become. There is nothing else that is needed. If I am trying to become, I will become. There is no trying which is defeatist in this universe. Babuji said, "Do and achieve." Achievement is guaranteed to one who will try. But if you are just sitting in your easy chair and reading Plato and Augustine, and I don't know, the life of criminals, we are going into despair after despair and saying, "No, no, this is not for me. Maybe in some future life."

So, you see, all that we need in spirituality is to be able to be brave enough to say, "My past is behind me." We cannot carry our past with us into the future. You know when I go along the roads of America I find every so often garage sales. People are always getting rid of the things they don't need any more, leaving them behind, moving houses, relocating – the famous American term: U-Haul. No? Here I haul, and you follow. [Laughter and applause]

So all that submission means, all that surrender means, is to say my past is behind me. My future is with

you. It's like a girl, you know, who gets married. My past was in Stonington, Connecticut. I am relocating to California with my beloved. That life isn't dead. My parents are still alive; my old home is still there. Nostalgia will be there. "Oh dad!" you can telephone, and "Oh mom!" you can telephone, and weep your heart out for an hour. But your life is now here, in California. Every girl knows this. Every man who changes his job is attracted by better circumstances, better salaries, better perquisites, more stock options, what have you, and doesn't care about the house that he's leaving behind. He cannot say, "Oh, I love this house, I cannot leave this house. I grew up in it."

You know dead places are for worship, not for growing in. Worship is not for growth – worship is paying homage to something which was. Growth is paying homage to what I've to become, to the future. Spirituality is to the future. Worship and religion is to the past. Please remember this very significant difference. I worship in temples, temples are wonderful...Walden Pond – wonderful! Thoreau's house – wonderful! They are monuments, they don't exist. It's better to read Walden than to go to Walden Pond, and sit and meditate, isn't it? It is better to read Gandhi, but you cannot follow Gandhi any more. Plato, where is he today? Of course his principles, his philosophies, his great dialogues – if you can benefit, yes; if you cannot, leave them alone. Because the easiest thing is to sit down, meditate and become.

We don't need knowledge. We don't need to base our spiritual life on past philosophies, past systems of knowledge, past achievements. I cannot become Vivekananda by reading about Vivekananda. I can try

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to become something like him if I did what he did, which was meditate. Was he able to meditate alone? No. He was a mere graduate in Calcutta: very arrogant, very proud, very intellectual. And he needed a master like Babuji Maharaj you know – Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who was a villager, who had no schooling but who was a mystic par excellence. And he had to tame Vivekananda, you see. So if Vivekananda, one of the great intellectuals of his time, a lion among men, a giant in his intellect, a man who could shake the people of the U.S. by his wonderful talk: “Brothers and sisters of America,” he roared in his lion voice. It is history. Suppose you stand up and say, “Brothers and sisters of America,” how many people will listen to you? You have to become what he became before people will listen to what he said, if you say it again.

So we cannot repeat, we cannot repeat parrot – like what somebody else said and then imagine that I am him. I can be him only if I become like him, and if I do what he did, say what he said from my heart, you know. So, easiest way is meditation, spiritual practice. But we abandon this in favour of going to Borders, and you know what’s that...Barnes and Noble, and buying all the books that we can, studying everything, picking hairs, picking nits, as they say – nitpicking. “This is not right. That is wrong. They said so. This is what this is. Judaism says this. Islam said that. Buddha said that. But you are saying something new, how can I believe you?”

Well, when Jesus spoke, it was all unacceptable to the people of what they call Israel now, you see. How many people liked or knew Jesus? They didn’t listen to him, least of all the religious people in the religion in which he was born. They hounded him, didn’t they?

It's a matter of history. The rulers of those countries didn't like him because he was a potential threat – a threat to peace. So the Romans didn't like him. His own people didn't like him. The nobles didn't like him. But the poor people followed him around. And when he went around and said, "Follow me," the great Peter followed him, and then James and John, the sons of Zebedee. I mean, I read my Bible long ago in school so perhaps I know a little more of Christianity than most Christians do. That is obedience. They didn't say, "I have to ask my mom. You know, my pastor won't like it. My grandma won't approve it." He said, "Follow me" – they followed.

Have we the guts? Have we the love for that man who's leading you to say, "Come with me" and you come. A mere fellow in, shall we say, Armani jeans costing \$777, looks at you, winks, and you follow him. Disgraceful! Jeans are attracting, not the man. Do we see the worth of people with whom we are interacting? Do we judge with the heart or with the head? Do we see with our eyes or with the divine wisdom with which the heart is endowed? Our life has become very trivial, very superficial. "Beautiful ice cream!" "Lovely pizza!" [chuckles] I don't know – all these terms, which we have, you know, misplaced. There are no more lovely girls. There are lovely pizzas. There are no beautiful girls, there are beautiful ice-creams. No? Transposition of values in the wrong apertures, avenues.

Truth means proper perception first. I cannot speak the truth if I don't know what is the truth. If you ask a newborn baby, "What is your name?" it would only blink at you. It does not know *what is a name*, before it can answer it.

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So you see, deservingness is only being empty, which only means throwing out everything that is in the bucket before you can fill it – valuable or not. If there is a drought in the country, it may even be gold, you have to throw out, because the bucket of water is life. Gold may be only death. Are we seeking life or are we seeking wealth? If you are holding onto gold, you may not have water to drink. You know there have been occasions I am told after the world war in Germany, when they used to carry a whole suitcase full of currency notes to buy a loaf of bread. Three million marks for a loaf of bread! Value of money had fallen so much. Three million marks for one loaf of bread! Money was valueless. Loads of paper to buy one chunk of bread. What is valuable? The chunk of bread or the suitcase full of currency? Severe drought, no water. What is worth it? The bucket full of gold or a bucket full of water? I would give my life for a cup of water if I am starving, if I am thirsty. But we don't know to what extent we are starving for this spiritual life. *La vita eternal*, they say. Because we don't know it. We are so full of our, what we call satisfaction, that we've developed wants, forgetting our needs.

Babuji Maharaj always emphasised need and not want should govern our life. I need food, I need water, I need fresh air; but I want pizza, I want asparagus. I want a room in the Marriott, double cushions, air conditioning. And when I go into that life, the basics of life are forgotten to such an extent that we are afraid to open our windows and breathe the fresh air outside because that may be polluted. You see, that which is universal, covering the whole globe, may be polluted, but this tiny bit of air in this room, eight by eight by

eight is pure. Can I exist under such circumstances? See, we are encapsulating ourselves into smaller and smaller capsules of so called healthy, happy lives forgetting the rest of the world. How it lives, how it dies, is no concern to us. Wars in the rest of the world do not affect us. Tragedies outside our homes don't move us. We are living in a bubble, and like any bubble, it can burst at any moment.

If anything is to come to my aid, it is what Babuji prescribed for a spiritual life – “Be simple and in tune with nature.” Think of others before you think of yourself. Elevate yourself into a spiritual life where the life is eternal and don't depend on this life, terrestrial life, mundane life, which is but a spark. Here today, gone tomorrow.

He used to tell the story of a prefect who told an abhyasi, “Come back tomorrow for satsangh.” And he was very angry. I said, “Why? Why are you angry, because the prefect may have been busy, he may have been occupied.” He said, “When a prefect takes on a job, he takes on a job. It is no more a question of his convenience.” He said, “Do you know, only God can say come back tomorrow, because only God knows who'll be here tomorrow.” And he recited the story of a great saint who was condemned by God to a suffering, because some devotee came to him seeking solace in a moment of extreme need and the saint said, “I am busy. Please come back tomorrow morning.” But that man when he went, died. So Babuji said, “The sin or whatever he had which brought him to the saint, that was his first and paramount job for the moment. He had no business to be busy with anything else.” When a patient goes to a doctor and is dying, the doctor's

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first deed is to look after the patient. Not to say, "I am busy, I am taking my wife to the theatre, or I am busy on the stock exchange, buying shares." We are not duty conscious, because we don't think of the others, we think only of ourselves – my bank account, my stock market, my broker. That saint was condemned to suffer. All the samskaras of the man who died, were transferred to the saint. And this is a true story, not something pulled out of the magician's hat.

So that is the extent, the depth of commitment that is demanded of a human being. You live for others and if you live for others, the others will live for you. "Serve to deserve," was not some slogan I got out of the magician's hat. Unless you serve, nobody will serve you. In the moment of utter need there will be no friend. They will call you names. They'll say, "Oh that guy! Well, what did he ever do for anybody else?" "No, no, but poor man! He's dying." "So what? Call 19 or 911 or whatever it is, you know." "Yes, but he can't even reach out for the telephone." "Well, I can't help it." We are too familiar with such responses to human situations of desperate need – where a man cannot take one breath of air, and he dies gasping for that single fistful of air that you need in your lungs.

Everything has to be earned. Deservingness means, earn it. Earn it in what way? Love and serve. So you see, spirituality is above all, loving and serving. To become capable of that service, you have to be loved and to be served by one who is willing to love you and serve you. The guy you call Master, you see. Accept it. That is surrender. Start a new life, which means throw away the old. That is surrender. You cannot continue to keep this page of the book in your eye, and read this page,

too. You have to turn it over. "No, no, I love that page." You can't read the next page. I mean this is ... children know these things.

Perhaps that is why in the Bible, or in Jesus' words, "Be as little children, and thou shalt enter the doors of heaven" – that innocence you see; that before I can take a new toy in my hand, I have to give up the old. Of course, children too weep because they want all of them at the same time. But they learn. Children learn very fast. Adults don't. They want to have all their toys with them, all their loves, so-called, with them, all their wealth with them. And they lose everything. And when they lose, they say, "Why God, did this have to happen to me?" No answer. God doesn't say, "I told you so," because He never told us so. Why didn't He ever tell us so? Because He said, "I am here, and you never listen to Me here, you know. You were looking for Me in temples, in synagogues, in mosques where I don't speak. But where I speak to you from within you, you ignored me all your life. What can I do? I am your eternal companion. In your heart I live. In your heart, I go through eternity with you. Because the heart never dies, love never dies. The eternal presence is eternal. I am always with you. Living or dead, you don't know it. You did not know in life that I was with you, how are you going to know in death?"

That is hell. There is no funny hell where molten lead is poured into the ears, and molten brass down your throat, and sulphurous fumes you have to breathe and things like that. Those are all poetic imaginations. Let us leave it to people like Dante. The real hell is where we are alone for the first time in our lives, absolutely, not even knowing that He is here. At least when we are

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alive we have some idea that there is something in me which keeps me alive. When I am dead, that is gone, unless I take Him with me – and that is eternal life.

So you see, there is nothing much that spirituality demands: emptiness and the capacity or the willingness to be filled – only two things. So please, I urge you all to re-examine your own understanding and appreciation of spiritual life, and see how far you can go if you throw away all the intellectual concepts, prejudicial concepts and accept that *here and now* this has to be.

Thank you.

Commit Yourself

Good morning fellow voyagers. It's blowing a bit today so I thought I would get this ship on even keel sort of. You know we have just elected into existence a new committee yesterday for the Australian Mission. I thought I should say hello to them and sort of give some guidelines for your future work. One of which is to pull together.

The first and most important is to pull together. I hope you know what pulling together means. So that you maintain direction. You know you have two sets of rowers, one on the left and one on the right, and if you're at cross-purposes the ship will go this way [moving hand left to right] like a snake, whereas if you pull in unison, it goes straight and fast. So, all of you are new committee members. And of course, we don't have training courses for committee members in the ashram or in the Mission. But, as I told Babuji Maharaj when I became a committee member, I said I have no experience. He said, "Get it." [Laughter] So that's the only way to get experience you see, get it. So I want

Address to Committee Members of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, Australia on 8th October 2003, Perth

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all of you to cooperate and get this Mission going on its straight course, no deviation from purpose, no deviations in its teaching, and no other deviations.

Number two is that the committee should concern itself with the growth of the Perth Mission, which must be established first. I don't believe in starting, you know, laying foundations all over the place, one in Melbourne, one in Adelaide, one in Sydney, and then watch the foundations there with tents all over them. That's not the way things should grow. Each project must be completed before the next project is undertaken. I don't want to dampen the spirit of the Sydneys, but this is a Mission, and like, you know, you must grow in a unified fashion. So Sydney, Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra, whatever you have, you know, Alice Springs, eventually, because that's one of my favourite places. [Laughter] They are all part of Australia and for me they're part of the world, and for Babuji Maharaj, they're part of the universe.

So, there is no favouritism, no working at cross-purposes, but each project must receive its due attention and must be completed. And all of Australia and New Zealand should cooperate in building this ashram up first because as Tapan pointed out yesterday, we have an obligation to retain this land. That obligation is to ourselves. Of course, he might have tried to pressurize me into building this very fast because he did tell me that the council can take back the land and all that sort of thing, but I don't think he believes so. Nevertheless, what we start, we must finish, soon and well and properly. So that is a commitment that you people have undertaken here, in Australia. When I say you people, I mean all Australians. And please get on with the job

of doing this as well as possible as soon as possible. Brother Michael Karassowitsch is here from Austria, he is an architect, he is involved with the planning of this ashram and eventually its execution. So I am thankful to him for having come all the way here to help us. And I believe he and Krishna and Tapan and the others concerned will have a meeting today later on after the satsangh, and plan for the future. Like we cannot have six boats with one oarsman each, but one boat with six oarsmen will go faster. Similarly, here we have one Mission, and each centre is only a limb of that Mission. So don't think of Sydney people contributing for the Sydney ashram and Kalgoorlie for Kalgoorlie ashram and things like that, but Oceania contributing towards the first ashram in Oceania. Being sure that as the need develops, future ashrams will be developed elsewhere too.

Number three, is to keep this system of Sahaj Marg simple and pure. Babuji Maharaj has been always emphasizing the need to maintain its simplicity and its purity, both go side by side. No deviations, no dilutions, nothing added to make it more attractive to local population, nothing subtracted to make it more acceptable to the occidentals, nothing added to make it more acceptable to Indians like *puja* [worship] and a little *karpoora aarthi* [prayer ritual] or things like that. Plain and simple meditation as we are practicing it today, forever. There is no need to beautify the system or to, you know, make it attractive. Those who want it will take it, those who don't want it, well I'm sorry, but that's all. It's like food, if you don't want it, you don't eat it.

So please retain the simplicity and the purity of Sahaj Marg at all costs, under all circumstances, and

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don't fall into the temptation of changing it, modifying it, embellishing it to suit the whims and fancies of local populations. It will be what it will be. If there is only one abhyasi, it doesn't matter, but that must be a good abhyasi, a true abhyasi, an abhyasi with a purpose, that is spiritual evolution. Not somebody who comes here for a pastime, or some company, or even to get married. So these are some simple appeals that I wanted to make to you. And prefects have to play their part, abhyasis have to play their part, and of course, the physical assets of the Mission has to play its part. He is providing a safe, a secure, and a spiritual atmosphere for our growth. So, that is the third purpose, that we maintain our ashrams clean, impeccably clean, and pure in spirit, dedicated only to the purpose for which they are created, that is for meditation.

So I hope all of you have understood what I am trying to say and will kindly honour your commitment to yourself because this is a commitment, each one to yourself, that you make when you commit yourself to the Mission and its purpose. Because after all, we are here for our spiritual evolution, and that can only happen if these parameters are followed, obeyed, and implicitly kept in mind for the future. Thank you.

Time is Precious

We have to do everything, especially our spiritual practice, hoping that we can complete it while we are still alive. You all know that samskaras are carried from life to life, and what we have brought here with us determines what we are. As far as the physical, material world is concerned, there can be no change. But spiritual life is an unlimited life, where the potential is from whatever we are, to the highest level of spiritual possible growth. Sahaj Marg and my Master have assured us that this is possible, achievable, provided you are willing to put your heart into it.

It is said that time wasted cannot be regained at all – time is gone. Once it is gone, you cannot recapture it. So every moment we waste, it is wasted forever. Every moment lost, is lost forever. Money can be lost and recovered. Even health can be lost and recovered – everything else, but not time. Repeatedly, we are getting indications from above, that, “Dear brother, dear sister, time is running out. Don’t play with time, don’t pass time, don’t waste time, utilize time, because, every

23rd October 2003, Kolkata, India

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second is precious.” Every second utilized properly, effectively, for our future spiritual welfare probably gains us another moment in eternity, which is infinite. Abhyasis have a tendency to think upon spiritual life as some sort of a game. We come, we sit, food is good, surroundings are good, we also meditate, maybe not for all the half an hour or forty-five minutes, but at least for a few minutes. Many people have confessed to me that, “I was able to meditate three minutes today.” But remember again, time gone is time gone. I cannot do yesterday’s meditation today. Even today’s meditation, if I don’t do, it is gone. Time moves without any brakes. Cars can be stopped, trains can be stopped, everything can be stopped, but not time.

I believe human life is only for us to come here and to go into our immortal divine abode – what Lord Krishna in the Gita says, “*Tad dhaama paramam mama – yad gatva na nivartante*” – That is my *param dhaam* [Supreme Abode], from which nobody shall return. But, we have to do it here, you see – like you have to buy the ticket before you can board the train, you have to enter the train before you can reach your destination, you have to stay in it. A journey may begin with buying a ticket, but it will end only when you have gone home at the other end, not before. So, this is something we have to give very serious thought to, “Am I doing what I should be doing, or am I not doing? Am I wasting time, am I playing with spirituality, is it a *tamasha* [fun], an escape from life?” I can assure you that the spiritual life is also a very pleasant and pleasurable life. It is not that you have to sit down on coals or fire, and meditate like the *sadhus* and *sannyasis* do. It is very pleasant. We have got a beautiful meditation hall, happy surroundings, fresh

air, comfortable *aasan* [seat]. Everything that a human being can want today, we have in our ashrams, even in our homes, most of us have.

We are no longer required to go off into the jungle, sitting down under a tree with a snake around your neck, and a tiger brushing its way past you, you know. Those are all from mythology. Today our life, spiritual life, is a most enjoyable, pleasurable, comfortable life. Good surroundings, happy atmosphere, *baag bagiche* [gardens], with your family. In no other *marg* [system] it is permitted. Sahaj Marg is the only *grihastha marg* [householder's way of life]. Everywhere else you are told that you have to renounce your wife, you have to renounce your children, and go. Sahaj Marg says, bring everybody with you, bring also your *bhateeja* [cousin] and you know, your *behnoi* [brother-in-law], also your *sasur* [father-in-law] and your *saas* [mother-in-law]. So long as they are human beings, they are welcome here. So, this is an all-inclusive system. Physical is provided for, mental is provided for, intellectual is provided for, but the sole purpose is spiritual evolution. There is no renunciation here, except renunciation of the tendency to waste time, to enjoy, to have pleasure in life, knowing that the true pleasure and true enjoyment are only in the spiritual life, when I am at my destination, where for eternity, I shall be happy.

So, please remember that Sahaj Marg is all-inclusive, there is no renunciation, there is no *tyaag* [renunciation], we are encouraged to live a family life, we perform marriages here, we give names to children, and we promote family welfare as a totality of human existence, not as something which is to be suffered, which is ignoble, which is sinful, but which has the

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sanction of God, because God created us. He created us as we are, he created male and female, and he said you must have children, but let them be properly born, *dharmic* [pertaining to dharma], et cetera, et cetera, you see. So, I repeat, this is the only grihastha marg, where we are allowed to live with our wife, children, family, encouraged to bring everybody into spirituality, so that we shall go together wherever we have to go, and the responsibility is on each individual abhyasi to do it properly, to do it with devotion and dedication.

So, that is all I have to say this morning, and I have to take the pleasure of inviting all of you to be present for the Inauguration on the 25th December. You know, accommodation in this ashram is limited. Calcutta abhyasis will not be allowed to stay here. They will come and go every day. As many as possible will stay outside, so people who wish to participate must already advise brother Ajay Bhattar or our centre-in-charge, Mr. Chandrakant Kothari, and other responsible people, so that we can reserve accommodation wherever it is to be done. I will also be staying here for the January 1st of 2004, which means I will be here for more than a week. Of course, I shall enjoy my stay. I hope you also will, in a spiritual sense.

Seek Guidance From Within

I wanted to point out that everything simple is not necessarily easy, and Sahaj Marg is certainly not easy. I remember I once spoke here on Basant Panchami day, about how even a sincere seeker can be assailed by doubts, which Sahaj Marg does not answer. I pointed out how the Gita itself, and the Gitacharya himself, can only give a solution, saying at the same time that, "It is your responsibility, Arjuna, to do this or not." And when Arjuna says, "But Krishna, this is not right," Lord Krishna only says, "You are either here to fight a war or not. In this war, if you are going to win, you have to do this. If you want to moralise, you must leave the war." He doesn't say it, but it is implied. You see this again and again, when, for instance, Bhishma has to be brought down, Drona has to be brought down, when even Karna has to be brought down. *Adharma* [non-righteous conduct] is the way of winning worldly wars. That is very absolute, very clear. The Gita and the Gitacharya have no advice to offer, no ways to offer. If you are fighting a worldly war, victory is only possible through Adharma.

Deepavali, 25th October 2003, Chennai, India

This is absolute. I mean, I have no doubt about it. I have gone through the Gita a few hundred times, and the problem arises when we want to fight our spiritual war in terms of worldly wars, and adopt similar means. Is it right to do in the spiritual way what we are compelled to do in a worldly way? Can we, for instance, kill an enemy in spirituality and get away with it? And say, "No, no, I am only bringing *dharma* [righteousness]." The Gita is very clear, that is the avatara's purpose, that is God's, or the incarnate god's purpose, nobody else's purpose, nobody else's work, thank heavens. It is not the duty of anybody else to re-establish dharma, it is only that of the incarnate deity, if you believe in one. It is the work of God, if you believe in Him, if you think there is one. It is certainly not man's duty to re-establish dharma. We have a right only to do our own work, establish dharma within ourselves. I think the Gita is also clear on that — the so called Kshetradharma, where your inner self is the battle field, and your lower self, you can say, is the Kaurava, and your higher self is Lord Krishna, trying to tell you, "Don't fight battles for victory, for countries, for thrones, for empires. Try to evolve."

And here comes the problem. Because today, in India you know, India is certainly a very morally depraved country, there can be no doubt about it. In the fifty-five odd years of freedom that we have enjoyed, we are seeing more and more statistics of growth, economic growth, material growth. Nobody talks of evolution, because the two don't go together. Spiritual evolution, spiritual growth cannot be shown in graphs or by comparative charts or, you know, measured in terms of progressive percentages.

So we are fooled, we are lulled into a sense of security by having economic growth charts thrown

at us, economists talking to us all the time of how wonderful India is – look at our roads, look at our buildings, look at our cars. Look at our gross national product. Look at individual prosperity, and what does a little moral sacrifice matter so long as you are happy? Of course, there is the other side of the coin that, as we are increasingly prosperous, increasingly well to do, those who are increasingly prosperous and well to do find they are in mental turmoil, moral turmoil, do not know what to do, how to do it, they don't have the courage to give up.

They want, you know, like that famous story of the South Indian devotee in Srirangam temple or somewhere, who had his two arms around the pillar because of the big crowd, and when hot *chakkaraipongal* [sweet pongal] was served as the *prasadam* [blessed food], he had the chakkaraipongal in his two hands around the pillar. If he withdrew the hands, the chakkaraipongal would fall, if he did not withdraw his hands, the chakkaraipongal would burn his hands. It is also the story of the child which does not know what to do, when its toy is broken, weeping away its heart, the parent not knowing how to console the broken child with the broken toy, the mother weeping in frustration, the father angry in frustration, et cetera, et cetera. It is all too common a scenario to need definition and delineation.

So you see, the growth and evolution, can they parallel? Are they like two pairs of rails on which a train can travel? Is it really possible to fly on two wings, two wings of the bird? Is there really a spiritual wing and a material wing? I am not trying to throw doubts into the hearts of the devotees, because the devotee has

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no doubt. He knows that spiritual success depends on slowly, progressively, methodically, systematically, giving up material values one by one as his personal spiritual appreciation approaches ever increasing heights of spiritual, what shall we say, flights. He knows it in his heart. We don't need to be taught that renunciation is necessary for spiritual success, for spiritual growth, for spiritual evolution, to reach that realm from which we don't return. Life itself has to be given up. There is no such thing as '*koondil kailasam*' [heaven in a cage]. Everybody knows this. It is the fool who believes that some saint went to heaven with his body. No wise man ever believed it, whatever religion may say, whatever another guru might have said about it. I repeat, it is only the fool who believes this. Or it is the absolute fool who wishes he could go to heaven with his body and enjoy the pleasures of his body there too. No sensible man, no wise man, ever believed such nonsense. You know that you cannot go to heaven with your senses and your body intact. Without the body, you don't need your senses.

So, we have all these problems of morality, you know, marriage, life without marriage, pleasure without marriage, pleasure within marriage, are they lawful, are they legal, are they moral? Today's society, we find what I can only call aberrant groups following aberrant ways of life, increasing perhaps in their vehemence, in their growth number-wise, becoming powerful enough to even sway legal circles, legal powers, to give legal sanction to many things which should not have legal sanction. I don't have to spell it out. Read your newspaper, you'll find that many things, which were illegal, are today legal. And I am not only talking of

income tax laws. We are always trying, in our, shall we say, lust and avarice, to legalise situations so that we can be happy with what we do. No man, who is really happy with what he does, really requires legal sanction. This applies more to moral sanction. Values like marriage, values like doing out of marriage what should only be done within marriage. Nobody who is, say, morally satisfied with the way he is living life needs to change religion and say this must be moral too. If God created two sexes, it is obvious that he needed two sexes. So certain relationships are, shall we say, permissible even in the eyes of God, certain are not. And if churches and temples were to sit in judgment and say, "This is from today permitted," it is only permitting permissiveness, and not really giving moral sanction to something which cannot be sanctioned at all by any moral authority.

So, you see, we are living in a world totally confused, because money power is growing, physical power is growing, terrorism power is growing, governmental power is of course almost absolute, they can do anything today. Every citizen is a slave of his government, there is no privacy, there is no sacredness, there is no secrecy. In very advanced countries, your lack of privacy, your lack of anything is total. In countries like ours, which are less developed, thank heavens, we still have some privacy, some secrecy, et cetera, left. So, we seem to be exchanging goodness and a moral life for so called, what shall I say, happy life, well fed, well motored, well roaded, you know, good roads, good cars, good aeroplanes, more and more apparent prosperity. We seem to be exchanging simple, moral, lives for complicated, I won't say immoral, but, questionably moral lives, where the questioner is your self.

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Each person is at night assailed by doubts. Is it right, what I have done today? Am I doing right, should I look to guidance, should I seek guidance, does it exist in Sahaj Marg? Unfortunately not!

Babuji Maharaj was like Lord Krishna. He himself told the story of how he had once received an order from above, as he said, to do certain things which no person could have done, should not have done. But, in implicit obedience to his Guru, he did it, and he said he was punished by having to fast three days. I said, "But how can you be punished by obeying your Guru?" He said, "You know, obedience to the Guru is obedience to the Guru. It is rewarded, because in a higher purpose this was necessary. But in the laws of the land, in the ways in which you should look, as a human being, this was not a correct thing to do. And Nature decrees a punishment for it, too. Obedience at the cost of punishment, and I accepted the punishment, and I did it. The only consolation for me was, I did it in response to my Guru's orders. I did not do it out of my own free will or out of personal, shall we say, need to do it." Of course, if you say, how can Babuji say such a thing, you can have the famous story of, I think, Parasurama, who had to kill his mother to prove his obedience.

So, you see, it is not that our religious and our Puranic [ancient or mythological] stories do not teach us. They teach us that, in certain ways, life has to be lived at considerable peril to ourselves, and the only moral guidance you can really have is not from religion, not from society, not from civil law, but from within yourself. And if, to seek that, you wish to do it, there is only one way, and that is to go the source of this, shall we say, guidance, which is the God within, the human, the person within, the Self, and that is why we meditate.

As we meditate and meditate and meditate, we do hear the inner voice responding to our calls, waiting to answer our questions. But then we are again having a doubt whether this is real. Am I really hearing a real voice, or am I afraid of doing what I want to do...very much desire to do and therefore, I think my inner voice says, "No." Then you go to your preceptor or to your so-called master and say, "Is it right, what I am hearing?" And he says, "It is your voice which is speaking, why don't you listen to it?" "No, no, but sir, how can it say, when everybody is doing it and they are right and they get away with it, how can it be wrong only in my case?" So, you see, we ignore the inner voice also.

And then as a society becomes powerful, parties become powerful, and, you know, what is wrong in one religion becomes right in another religion, which has always said it is wrong, we can see this happening today in our country. We used to condemn one person for breaking down a temple, now we also break down other temples of other religions, and it is right! Why is it right? Because we say so. So, you see, how easy it is to pervert religion, religious laws, religious sanctity, and pretend that what you are doing is right because you are doing that to the other man which he did to you, going back to the old Hebraic law – of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He killed me; therefore I can kill him, isn't it?

So, you see, society is a big danger for us. Governments are big dangers, religion is the biggest danger. Because today, religion, even Hinduism, I say even Hinduism, because Hinduism has hitherto been pure, but today's Hinduism is not. Today's Hinduism has become as fundamentalist as other religions, preaching

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death, preaching destruction. And so, where will you turn to now for help? You can't go to a temple and ask a priest. You cannot look to your religious leaders. The only guidance is from within. Therefore, you see, Sahaj Marg says, "Seek, for everything, seek for happiness, seek blessedness, seek growth, seek evolution, and seek advice on your journey, step by step, foot by foot, step after step, foot after foot, from this source within. If you look to the outside world, there is no guidance.

So, this is my conclusion, you know, after having studied the Gita for, I don't know, almost should I say, sixty years. Lord Krishna is no guide. Religion is no guide, Sahaj Marg is no guide. Sahaj Marg gives us a teaching, but the responsibility for living by that teaching is entirely yours. Sahaj Marg has given you a set of maxims, ten maxims. "Babuji, can I get up a little late tomorrow?" He will say, "If you feel tired, what can I do?" "Babuji, when I am sitting in meditation I am feeling sleepy." "Eat two rotis less!" "But I am hungry!" "What can I do?"

So, you see, the poor old man can only say "What can I do?" You know what to do. It is one of my, I won't say research, because it is too lofty and pedantic a term, but it is my finding, after forty-five years of Sahaj Marg, that all our questions are based upon our desires. You go to your guru and say, "Sir, can I occasionally smoke a cigarette?" it is because you want to smoke. "No, no, are you a smoker?" Babuji says. "No, no Babuji, I am not a smoker, but, is it permitted, for example?" So, Babuji says, "Why does this young man ask, if he doesn't do it? Obviously because he wants to do it, and he wants sanction! You see." So, it is against your conscience. All outside sanction we seek only to salve the voice of our

inner conscience, to subdue it. But, this voice cannot be subdued even by God. There is no master of any calibre who can salve your conscience and say, "Shut up! I say it is right." It will not work.

Therefore, the famous confessional of the Christian church fails. The church can say, "In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, I absolve you of your sin." The man doesn't believe it. The doubt comes, "Who is this fellow to forgive me? Does *He* forgive?" This voice says, "My son, I cannot forgive." "No, no, but I am asking, does *He* forgive?" The voice says, "I am *He*!"

So remember, you know, if you want God's permission, God's advice, God's guidance, it is He who is *here*, who can give it to you. Don't look to moral laws, don't look to spiritual laws, don't look to civil laws, don't look to religion, no father, no mother, nobody can assist you. It is only you yourself who have to guide yourself. Therefore, it is said in one of the famous songs I remember from my childhood in Calcutta, "Close all the senses of the body, and open the window of the soul, of the heart. Let the beacon shine from here. That shall be the light which shall guide you!" Thank you.

The Truth Is in Your Heart

According to the wishes of my beloved Master, our Mission continues to expand throughout the world, and more particularly in India, which is the bedrock and solid foundation of any spirituality. A visible, tangible sign of this vast expansion is this ashram at Kolkata, which we are dedicating today to my great and divine Master, Revered Babuji Maharaj. Our Mission will shine forth over the whole earth from such points of light, which cannot be concealed. Thus has it been decided by the great masters of our Sahaj Marg *paddhati* [organization], Lalaji Maharaj and Babuji Maharaj.

The psychological fragility, which has been developing in so-called advanced societies, is due to a way of life not commensurate with man's inner essential equilibrium. The modern human being is grappling with many sorts of physical and mental problems which are causing insidious pollution. In advanced countries, the way of life is particularly destabilizing and worrying for the mental health of human beings. They cling on to

27th November 2003, Satkhola, India

so many misconceptions that they are completely lost. Such pollution, especially of the mind, imperceptibly modifies human behaviour. Spiritual elevation will be an invaluable recourse toward preserving this equilibrium. All the present structures of social life are to be remodelled or there is a risk of generating a mad world.

Only spirituality will be able to save humanity, and make it see reason again, and enable it to adopt an ethics of a healthier life and turn resolutely to true values. Humanity needs this refreshing wave, which alone can unite human beings into one global family, instead of dividing them with ideas of hatred and violence. Our system of Sahaj Marg carries a message, which is that each one holds the truth in his own heart. It is enough to seek this truth and discover it using a simple non-demanding method, which liberates us from the blinkers of an ignorance voluntarily maintained since centuries for purposes of domination.

Since the beginning of time, man has been moving from discovery to discovery and he believes, at each point in time, that he possesses the truth. A time will come when the truth will appear to him for good. The man of the future will become receptive to their wavelength and he will be captivated by the reality, which, little by little, will appear to him by opening him up to the knowledge of these phenomena. From that day on he will no longer resemble his ancestor, i.e., as he is today, with fixed convictions. He will go on to discover the parallel worlds which surround him, and which his unrefined senses cannot be in contact with. This time will surely come.

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Today's world has a passion for the current technology which he is exploring, but it is only a gadget, compared to the amazing and personal possibilities that the human being possesses even now, but without any knowledge of it. When the time comes, the level of evolution of humanity will inform him about these infinite resources, which will be accessible to him.

The Master is doing a mammoth cleaning work, which is redeeming and full of benefits for each one of our fellow abhyasis, and which goes well beyond them in its scope. All will benefit from this *manna* [nectar] *from heaven* offered to them. Sahaj Marg will be universally acknowledged out of necessity in the future, when evolution must accelerate on the earth. This acceleration is envisaged in the framework of the new era usually mentioned by men though they actually do not know what it is all about. This world must be regenerated. In a way, its image must be transformed to reveal its original beauty, which was concealed by the dreadful image that it has acquired over the centuries. Let time pass, for it is our ally. The little man of today must grow, for he cannot remain eternally confined within his present ignorance. Sahaj Marg, when sincerely and regularly practised, will work toward that.

Neither change, nor modification, nor addition to our Sahaj Marg method is required. It is self-sufficient, and will continue to help humanity into the foreseeable future. We should not be attracted by the fashions and the fascinations of the moment. We must preserve Sahaj Marg from the temptation and pressures of some persons to bring their personal touch to the method. Curiosity is man's natural tendency. He finds that which he does not know to be intriguing. Anything

new stimulates his mind. Our way is not meant as a recreation. Spiritual maturity leads towards simplicity rather than intellectual curiosity. Many serious ways were weakened, and even destroyed, by such deviations in the past.

Time is short; humanity as a whole is destabilized by a worrying way of life in terms of equilibrium, by inculcated misconceptions that will be its ruin. Happy are those whose equilibrium is found in uniting with God in their heart, outside any ideology. They remain free in their way of thinking and acting. May God pity this suffering humanity, which searches for Him hopelessly, without being aware of it. Religions should pacify people, and unite all humanity into one global human family joined together by mutual love. Instead, they do nothing but exacerbate bad feelings and divide humanity into warring camps, all poised at each other's throats.

Sahaj Marg is a means, a method of practice, given to the man of this century to enable him to speed up the process of his own evolution. It fulfils the requirements of a great pacifist movement, which tries to provide men with wisdom, and faith in God who lives inside each person, whatever his race, religion or creed, since to Him all men are equal. Sahaj Marg can, in the various countries where it is established, bring some points of light into the darkness of ignorance as it now prevails on this earth. A large majority of men live on negative thoughts put forward by unscrupulous beings serving only their own personal interests. God resides in everything, in every human being. In His eyes, all are as one and for this reason, human beings should at least respect each other, even though they may be incapable of loving each other.

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Our way gives to man the inner strength and equilibrium which is so necessary, particularly in these disturbed times, where it is not easy to reason rightly amidst all these upheavals. The heart must keep its own neutrality and serve its true cause, which on no account it should be diverted from. Humanity grows painfully slowly. Its growth is not easy. It drags on and causes a lot of damage. Man plays with this planet, which bears the brunt of his unwise doings. The powerful and the rich feel invincible and alone in space on a planet, which they think can dominate the rest of the universe. They pollute it, and destroy it little by little. They hatch plots and develop destructive weapons that will leave desolation on the earth. When will man understand that only love can save the world?

This word is so often misused, distorted or half-heartedly used, and overused even in a spiritual way like ours. A true spiritual process necessarily leads to it. It is the only food that the soul enjoys. It must be sought and maintained carefully. It is the supreme refuge. God being love, it is inseparable from faith, and without it, faith cannot really blossom. The heart must keep a sense of proportion and must not be involved too much in the inevitable turbulences of life. It must preserve its own life and maintain a high level of spirituality. The spiritual heart is the guardian of the *being*, in its various aspects. It must maintain vigilance and integrity. Anchored in this world, it gets food emanating from it, but it does not belong to it, since it is connected to a power that it cannot really identify.

Each incarnation offers to human beings the means that enable them to find fulfilment under suitable

circumstances. It is up to everyone, from where they are, and within the parameters of their incarnation, to find their own way and take advantage of this asset.

Meeting one's Master in one's life is an infinite grace that should not be overlooked, as it may not occur again so soon. Blessed be the man who believes in God and who venerates Him. Let us pray for this world in distress, thrown into panic by the murderous madness of those in highest positions of power, concealed under false pretexts and promises of abiding peace and plenty.

P. Rajagopalachari
27th November 2003,
Satkhol Himalayan Ashram

Spirituality – The New Culture of Harmony and Brotherhood

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I love Bengal and Bengali. Like Brother Tapan, I also studied here at St. Xavier's College. I have and I will continue to have great love and reverence for Swami Vivekananda, whom I have personally considered to be one of the greatest Indians ever to grace this *karma bhoomi* [land of action] of ours. It is a shame that, as we say in Tamil or in Hindi or in English, or in any language: No great man is respected, loved, in his own country. I hope my Bengali brothers and sisters will not be upset about it. In Bengal we have lots of places associated with the name of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, but few people follow their teaching or their way of spirituality.

All good things, especially in India, we export. You know our best bananas go abroad, our best mangoes go abroad, our best intellects go abroad, our spirituality

Inauguration of the Kolkata Ashram, 25th December,
Kolkata, India

goes abroad and we have to re-import it. You know, everything in India was originally Indian. Until the British ruled us we imported cement, we imported iron, we imported steel; we only did not import human beings because that is the one thing in which we are highly capable of manufacturing. But today we are also exporting humans. You know, much of the so-called information technology in the computer sciences – the people manning them are people of Indian origin who are selling their brains abroad, putting on foreign clothes, getting westernized, eating what they themselves call junk food, and pretending to be great. And like the *Bandar-log* [monkey folk] of Kipling they say, “We all say so, so we must be great.” Greatness should abide where it was born. Like a human being is in his heart, not in his head or in his feet; the existence, the *summum bonum* of human existence, is in the heart. The Veda says – *hridayam tat vijaaneeyaata*. That [referring to the heart] is where the Lord himself resides, and the Lord must have the human heart as his residence and that heart must have its residence in a human body. Divinization comes from inside, good things come from outside.

So as Tapan pointed out, as he tried to quote what Babuji Maharaj said, “Read and enjoy, do and feel and become.” So you see, I am very proud that, among all our exports of iron ore and wood and I don’t know what else, cabbages, kings, we are managing to export our spirituality today to the farthest corners of this world - thanks to Lalaji’s great genius in creating a system and to Babuji’s great genius, added with a lot of personal effort in spreading it abroad. Therefore we are able to talk today of Sahaj Marg in most corners of

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the world. Brother Tapan Chakravorthy lives in Perth in Australia. Brother Michel who released the souvenir is from Tunisia. He is actually an African from one part of the Congo, a Republic of Africa. We have people from Russia, from Belarus, from Denmark, from England, South America – name the country and they are here. We are a small United Nations assembly here and that is something. You know, we need not be proud of it, because there is nothing to be proud of in this. It is recognition of the fact that spirituality today is the only force, the only power, the only value which can bring human beings together, making them forget their race, their language, their culture, everything else.

What we are doing in Sahaj Marg is to create a new human race with a new culture of unification, of harmony, of brotherhood, and in such assemblies we have representation from some fifty nations, forty cultures, thirty languages, and many colours and, of course, two sexes. You see that this is a minute representation of what the world can become, if the great United Nations did something that we are doing, followed the pattern that we are following, instead of giving lectures at their great assemblies and spending billions of dollars. Those of you who have the power and who have the access to such august bodies, in governments and in so-called organizations, which are trying to unify people of the world, should advise them on how to spend their money, because for one dollar that I spend here, they spend probably a million dollars in the United Nations. That is their scale of expenditure.

People must recognize that without spirituality, there can be no unification. United Nations as a body may exist, but there are no united nations. Even the

nations themselves are split asunder by forces today which we have no control over. They are not only political forces, they are religious forces, they are racial forces. Go to any country in this world. I have lived in Yugoslavia – it was a lovely country. Today it has been split apart by so-called ethnic problems. It was Islam versus Christianity that split Yugoslavia apart – the Serbs killing the Muslims. The United Nations was unable to do the right thing, except to put peacemaking bodies there and post soldiers – to do what?

India is the epitome of all religious animosity – a breeding ground for religious mistrust. I know it is unsavoury. My friends may not like me to say the truth about India, but India is a land divided by not just two religions, but Hinduism itself is divided by a hundred and fifty cults, castes, and creeds. So you see India is a very small country divided by a large number of divisive forces against which we have no recourse. But I am happy to say, here too we have the Brahmin, the Muslim, the Kayasth, whatever you want to say; they are all here sitting side by side forgetting their differences, coming together because of their love for one Master, one Mission, one method.

These are the values I hope you will all take out of this ashram when you go, talk about, spread and endeavour with all your life to create among your own small communities. I am not talking of religious or social communities – the communities where you live. Babuji did not know any language other than Hindi. He could speak in English, of course. He was not a speaker. Just by his presence he managed to unify a great deal of this world under one umbrella called Sahaj Marg. We are speaking, and so we have a second advantage. You

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people can do also; you can be, you can speak, and you can do.

So, as I have said again and again, and I would like to emphasize once more – in Sahaj Marg you are not here only for yourself; you are here to be made into something that can make others. As Babuji once said, you know, this *paraspathar* [touchstone] about which Rabindranath Tagore has done so much *kasanti* [testing], *paraspathar* you call it in Hindi, the touchstone in English – that which proves the purity of gold. Babuji said, “Here I have the touchstone which will not prove the purity of gold or make gold, but will create another touchstone.” So it was with that intention, in that meaning, that he said that he creates masters, not slaves. If you misunderstand that and everybody wants to sit on the *sinhaasan* [throne] and say, “I am the Master,” *adhogati* [downfall], negative path – *patan* [fall] as they say beautifully in Hindi. If you say, “I have mastered myself. I am now in a position not to think of myself. I no longer live for myself. I exist for your sake,” then such a person can become very well a master without being the Master.

It is a responsibility that each one of you must accept, because this is a voluntary thing, not an imposed thing. Sahaj Marg imposes no obligation on anybody. We don't even tell you to practise regularly. If you don't have the good sense to do it, that is your loss. Brother Hari Krishan Chaudhry said, “We don't want to come back here, however wonderful this world.” The great Rabindranath referred to this land as the *sonaar bangal* [golden Bengal], but not for us. We are here for today, we are here to take the *sona* [gold] out of the *Bangla* (and what is the *sona* of the *Bangla*? It is the culture,

the tradition, the beauty) and spread it among other worlds, other nations, other cultures. Bengali is a very rich language, but you must remember that Swami Vivekananda was as arrogant and intellectual as anyone in here, but he had to subordinate that arrogance and that intellect at the feet of his guru, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, before he could become Vivekananda.

So you see, we can be born arrogant, we can be born proud, we can be born great, we can be born stupid, we can be born a beggar, we can be anything, because don't think beggars have no arrogance. I have heard a beggar laughing at a great man who got into a Mercedes Benz. He said, "Fool! He thinks, by riding in the Mercedes Benz he is greater than me. Look at me – I am sitting under the tree and my *khana* [food] comes to me, people come to me and give me money; he has to go and earn money." This is what one beggar said in my hearing. He was right too, because essentially what that beggar has is the shade of the tree, the breeze that God gives, the sunlight conferring health upon him, and his food coming to him, which was also correct. And these people are going around in magnificent cars, in air-conditioned rooms, maybe earning a million to what that fellow earns one, but yet eating the same food, suffering the same sickness, the same deprivation, the same traumas of the body and the mind, and the same misery. Ultimately, of course, both end up on a pile of wood. That is all that matters, how you are born and how you die. As they say, "Born in sweat, blood and tears; dead on a pyre of wood." In between is all this *tamasha* [drama] of greatness and poorness, poverty and riches, intelligent and foolish, man and woman, et cetera, et cetera.

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Remember that in this land of great intellect, great beauty, there also was great sacrifice. Shri Aurobindo was a great intellectual who was going to be an ICS officer, you know – the elitist of elite services in those days – and he said *no* to that. Before that, he was Aurobindo Ghosh and later on he became Shri Aurobindo, you see. He went to jail, he had his revelations, he built the ashram in Pondicherry, spent his time in *tapasya* [penance], wrote books for people. So everything that we achieve in the material world has to be sacrificed before the Lord of Death, who holds sway on everything, takes it away from us. Remember – you can only give it when you have it. After death you can give to nobody. *Yeh vaseeyat sab likhna bevakoofi hai* [It is foolishness to write wills.] Only *vakeels* [lawyers] make money out of *vaseeyats* [wills]. Who gets the money after you die? You don't know. It may hang in a court of law for two hundred years until two thousand rupees becomes one rupee and that one rupee is shared by seventeen litigants who are the so-called progeny of the original estate. Don't leave wills. Use your *will*. That will help you while you are alive; that will take you to where you are to go after this body leaves you or you leave the body. And that is the wisdom, that everything that we have – power, money, intelligence - must be used for a spiritual purpose to get liberation from all these things. Because like a boat in which you cross the Ganga, you leave the boat after you cross. You don't say, "Wonderful boat, beautiful boat, *aamaar* [my] boat," and carry it with you. People will laugh if you carry a boat with you. Leave the boat behind; leave knowledge behind; leave intellect behind; leave money behind, power behind. Progressively leave them, like the jet

aircraft which leaves a trail behind but it moves on – that is the wisdom of life.

I pray to my Master to confer this wisdom as a blessing upon all of us, because wisdom is never acquired, wisdom is conferred. Babuji Maharaj said, “The eyes of knowledge, the true knowledge, the knowledge of wisdom, is only given by opening.” It is opened in us by a process, which in Brahmanism they call *upanayanam*. That is what we should aspire to. That is what Sahaj Marg offers. That is what my Master has blessed us with as his teaching, as his practice. That is what these ashrams are meant to serve. I hope all of you will benefit by using these ashrams for the right purpose, at the right time, which is while you are still alive. Thank you.



HeartSpeak 2003

“So you see, we need all these attributes, human attributes ... of patience, perseverance, faith, love, devotion, and mostly love and discipline, where each balances the other -- love balancing a discipline, preventing it from deteriorating into gross misuse of power and authority; discipline balancing love from degenerating into mere mushy nonsensical emotionalism. These are the human, absolutely human, behavioural characteristics that we need, attributes that we need, before we can embark on a voyage of becoming Divinized.”

P. Rajagopalachari

The author, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, (born in India in 1927), is the spiritual head and president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. He was raised in the rich cultural heritage of the East and educated extensively in the Western tradition. He emphasises that regulation of the mind is essential for the discovery of the true nature of one's inner self. HeartSpeak 2003 features the collected talks and lectures delivered by the author while travelling within India and abroad in the year 2003.

Sahaj Marg (the Natural Path) is a Raja Yoga system of spiritual training based on heart-centred meditation, simplified for modern life. The practice is founded on the principle that God is all-pervasive, and therefore pervades the heart of each and every person. The goal of the practice is explicitly spiritual: attaining the ultimate goal of human existence, which is oneness with God, or Self.

Training in Sahaj Marg is free of charge and is open to all over eighteen years of age. The only qualification is a genuine and abiding interest in spiritual growth and the willingness to participate.

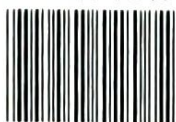
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Manapakkam, Chennai – 600 116

ISBN 978 93 80335 08 7



9 789380 335087

P.Code 1045



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Spiritual Hierarchy Publication Trust
“Divine Bliss”
North Block, 2/3, Judges Court Road,
Kolkata - 700 027